NATION

‘Khalistanis’ send bomb threat to RSS in M’rashtra, Gujarat

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

Meta partners with RIL for data centres in Gujarat

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

‘Felt great’ Says Messi after Argentina’s 3-0 win over Iceland

≫ Page: 8 ≪

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Truce ends. US strikes Iran; Tehran hits Kuwait, Jordan

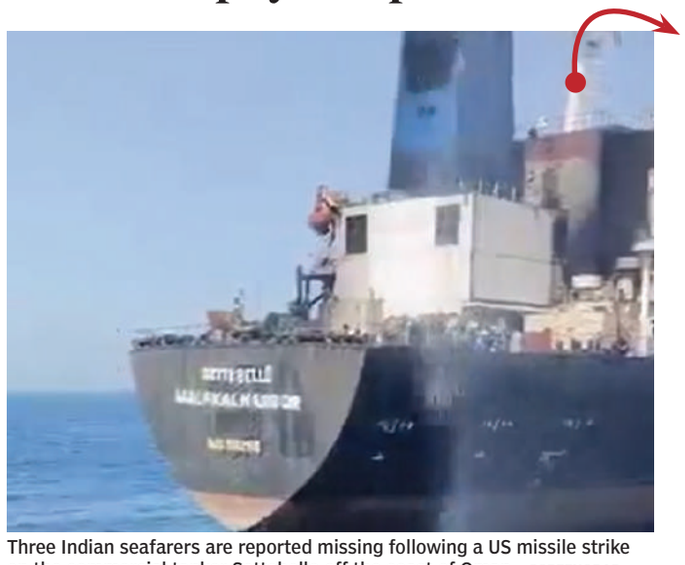
Trump says Tehran will ‘pay the price’ for slow negotiations

DUBAI, 10 JUNE

The United States launched airstrikes on Iranian targets early Wednesday after blaming Tehran for the crash of an American attack helicopter, prompting retaliatory missile attacks by Iran against countries in the region and pushing a fragile ceasefire closer to collapse.

The escalation has placed the 8 April US-Iran ceasefire under severe strain. Hours after Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan came under Iranian fire, US President Donald Trump said on Truth Social that Iran was taking “too long to negotiate a deal” and would now “pay the price”. Trump said, “We hit them hard yesterday and we’re going to hit them again; we are very close to a deal, but they keep stalling us.”

US Central Command said fighter jets struck Iranian air-defence systems, ground control stations and surveillance radar sites. Iran confirmed attacks near Bandar Abbas and Qeshm Island but did not disclose the extent of the damage. Washington described the operation as a proportional response to recent attacks on US forces and commercial shipping.



Three Indian seafarers are reported missing following a US missile strike on the commercial tanker Settebello off the coast of Oman —SCREENGRAB

Iran vowed retaliation and later claimed responsibility for attacks in Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan. Jordan said it intercepted five missiles targeting the Muwaffaq Salti Air Base, which hosts US military aircraft, including F-35 fighter jets. Bahrain and Kuwait also reported intercepting incoming projectiles.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi condemned the US strikes as a violation of Iranian sovereignty and asserted Tehran’s right to self-defence. Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said Iran would review its position on negotiations aimed at ending the conflict. The latest escalation follows the crash of a US Army attack helicopter near the Strait of Hormuz after a collision with an Iranian drone. A US official said it remained unclear whether the incident was intentional.

The renewed hostilities have also raised concerns over regional stability and global energy supplies. Iran has repeatedly highlighted its ability to disrupt shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a vital route for global oil and gas exports. Since the conflict began with US and Israeli attacks on Iran on February 28, energy prices have surged, with Brent crude rising more than 25 per cent to $ 91 a barrel. —*PTI*

Oman tanker attack: India summons US diplomat

India summoned US Charge d’Affaires Jason Meeks and lodged a protest over a US attack on tanker Settebello off Oman, carrying 24 Indians. Three crew members are missing. This is the second attack on a vessel with Indians on it, in a span of just two-days. India also called for free passage in Hormuz.

Saayoni, Shatrughan, Yusuf Pathan join TMC’s rebel group

Saayoni Ghosh, Yusuf Pathan and Shatrughan Sinha —ANI

KOLKATA, 10 JUNE

The rebel group of parliamentarians in the Trinamool Congress is believed to have secured the support of 19 MPs — the two-thirds of the party’s parliamentary strength required to form a separate faction and avoid disqualification under anti-defection provisions.

Sources said the camp, led by Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, includes Saayoni Ghosh, Shatrughan Sinha, Yusuf Pathan, Jagadish Chandra Basunia, Khalilur Rahaman, Abu Taher Khan, Partha Bhowmick, Bapi Haldar, , Mala Roy, Mitali Bag, Deepak Adhikari, Kalipada Soren, June Malia, Arup Chakraborty, Sharmila Sarkar, Asit Kumar Mal, Satabdi Roy and Rachana Banerjee. Sayoni, was one of the party’s most prominent young faces and a vocal defender of Mamata Banerjee who emerged as a key campaigner against the BJP during the Assembly polls.

The development has reduced Mamata’s effective strength in the Lok Sabha to just nine MPs and plunged the TMC into one of the gravest crises in its 28-year history.

The dissident MPs have reportedly informed Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla of their decision to function as a separate parliamentary bloc under Dastidar’s leadership. They are also expected to argue that Dastidar continues to be the TMC’s chief whip in the Lok Sabha, a claim likely to trigger a legal and procedural battle.

The rebels have ruled out joining the BJP immediately and instead plan to support the NDA while functioning as a separate group.

The parliamentary revolt follows a major split in the West Bengal Assembly, where 58 of the TMC’s 80 MLAs reportedly broke ranks and backed expelled MLA Ritabrata Banerjee. —*PTI*

≫≫More on Page 3

Didi’s ghar waapsi? Buzz gathers around TMC, Cong merger

Speculation over a possible merger of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) with the Congress intensified on Wednesday after party’s national general secretary, Abhishek Banerjee, held talks with Rahul Gandhi in Delhi. This was a day after TMC Chief Mamata Banerjee met Sonia Gandhi. Banerjee founded the TMC in 1998 after breaking away from Congress. Sources said the meeting reflected ongoing engagement between the two parties following the INDIA bloc discussions earlier this week. TMC reportedly conveyed its support for a stronger opposition alliance and accepted Rahul Gandhi’s leadership within the bloc. Congress, however, made it clear that any merger proposal would have to originate from the TMC. Despite the buzz, senior TMC leaders dismissed reports of a merger as “baseless”.

—*Salar News*

Pakistan Army helicopter crashes in PoK, all killed

ISLAMABAD, 10 JUNE

An Mi-17 helicopter of the Pakistan Army Aviation crashed near Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) on Wednesday, killing all on board, the army said. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistan military, said the accident occurred “during take-off due to a technical fault.” A board of inquiry has been ordered. Meanwhile at least 11 people were killed and dozens injured on Sunday in PoK’s Rawalakot city, the capital of Poonch district, during clashes between police and protesters as authorities reportedly opened fire on people gathered at the funeral of an activist. Conflict has flared in the region since 5 June, after a popular protests against inflation, and demands for the restoration of political, economic, and human rights. —*PTI*

DKS meets Gandhis amid Cabinet woes

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE 10:

Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Wednesday met Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in Delhi amid growing discontent within the newly expanded state cabinet over portfolio allocations.

Shivakumar’s visit comes as several ministers and senior leaders have expressed dissatisfaction over their assignments and positions in the government.

Food and Civil Supplies Minister KH Muniyappa accompanied Shivakumar to Delhi. Sources said Muniyappa is unhappy with his portfolio and has sought a change in his ministerial responsibilities. Days earlier, the seven-time MP had publicly stated that he would not assume charge of the department, but later relented after speaking with Rahul Gandhi.

Bengaluru Development Minister Krishna Byre Gowda has also travelled to Delhi after failing to secure control over BDA and the Bengaluru Metropolitan Region Development Authority (BMRDA). Party insiders said Gowda believes the portfolio lacks authority without oversight of the two key agencies responsible for Bengaluru’s urban planning and development. Senior Congress leader TB Jayachandra is reportedly unhappy over being left out of the cabinet and is expected to press his case with the party leadership in Delhi.

Former minister Zameer Ahmad Khan also appeared upset when questioned about his cabinet prospects, though he declined to comment.

MLA Rizwan Arshad flew to New Delhi to lobby for a ministerial berth in the Cabinet.

Meanwhile, Industries Minister MB Patil dismissed reports of dissatisfaction over not being appointed Deputy Chief Minister.

Earlier in the day, the Chief Minister visited the National Students’ Union of India (NSUI) office, Youth Congress headquarters, where he said that he is going to restart college elections. —*Salar News*

Cong MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Congress Parliamentary Party Chief Sonia Gandhi, CM DK Shivakumar and LS Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi during a meeting in New Delhi on Wednesday —PTI

PM Narendra Modi shares ‘jhalmuri’ with NDA leaders during a meeting to celebrate his government completing 12 years in New Delhi —PTI

Modi becomes India’s longest serving PM

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi became India’s longest-serving elected prime minister, surpassing Jawaharlal Nehru’s record of 4,398 days in office, the Centre on Wednesday highlighted key reforms and initiatives undertaken during the NDA government’s 12 years in power.

Addressing an NDA conclave, Modi launched a sharp attack on the Congress, saying the period of slow economic growth under its rule was misleadingly termed the “Hindu growth rate” when it should have been called the “Congress growth rate” because it reflected a failure of governance.

Modi said a major achievement of the NDA since 2014 was freeing the country from what he termed the Congress’s “vicious trap” and fostering political stability and decisive governance. A resolution passed at the conclave congratulated him on becoming the longest continuously serving elected prime minister. Modi dedicated the honour to NDA allies and BJP workers.

The government cited several landmark decisions as defining moments of the past 12 years. These included the launch of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana in 2014, which expanded financial inclusion and enabled direct benefit transfers; demonetisation in 2016, aimed at tackling black money and promoting digital payments; and the rollout of the Goods and Services Tax in 2017, creating a unified indirect tax regime.

Other major initiatives highlighted were the 2019 abrogation of Article 370, which revoked Jammu and Kashmir’s special status, and the National Education Policy 2020, which promotes the three-language formula. —*PTI*

≫≫More on Pages 2, 3 & 5

No plans to replace paper currency with plastic notes: Govt

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

The Centre dismissed social media reports claiming that the Reserve Bank of India will withdraw all paper currency notes and replace them with plastic notes by the end of this month.

This came after messages circulated across digital platforms, triggering concern among citizens regarding the status of their legal tender.

The Press Information Bureau (PIB) flagged the viral messages as baseless. PIB Fact Check, the government’s fact verification handle, explicitly stated that the central bank is not transitioning toward synthetic alternatives. The existing paper currency will continue to remain in circulation, official sources added.

Authorities highlighted that citizens must exercise caution and cross-check information before forwarding news on messaging applications. They advised the public to rely only on official communication channels, such as the RBI website to avoid speculation and panic, they said. —*ANI*

KIADB TO DIGITISE LAND MANAGEMENT PROCESS IN 100 DAYS

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

The Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) will digitise every stage of its operations, from land acquisition to industrial plot allotment, under a major governance initiative.

Large and Medium Industries Minister MB Patil has set a 100-day deadline for the project. Patil told reporters all records relating to plots in 224 industrial areas would be digitised through the Integrated Land Management System developed by the E-Governance Department.

Patil said the move would eliminate problems associated with old records, prevent errors such as duplicate compensation payments, and provide investors with easy access to information without relying on middlemen.

Officials have been asked to complete scanning of plot allotment records in older industrial areas in a month. The database will be integrated with Rural Development Department’s e-Swathu platform to facilitate services such as e-Khatas.

Separately, Home Minister Priyank Kharge called for service delivery via the integration of departmental databases and use of Artificial Intelligence, Geographic Information Systems. —*PTI*

Meeting Epstein was error in judgement: Gates

WASHINGTON, 10 JUNE

Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates said on Wednesday that he made a “grave error in judgement” by meeting with Jeffrey Epstein. He was facing lawmakers behind closed doors before the House Oversight Committee. Gates said he “never witnessed” Epstein’s criminal conduct.

Gates, who appeared in the Epstein files, said he was introduced by colleagues and was drawn in by Epstein’s claims of raising billions. Gates says he ended the relationship in 2014 as Epstein did not deliver. Gates added he neither went to Epstein’s island nor “victimised anyone”.

Their relationship began in 2011, three years after Epstein pleaded guilty to soliciting prostitution from a minor. Epstein killed himself in a New York jail in 2019 while awaiting trial for sex-trafficking. —*PTI*

MAGICAL STORYTELLER

Legendary filmmaker Bharathiraja no more

CHENNAI, 10 JUNE

Veteran director, producer and screen writer P Bharathiraja died at his city residence on Wednesday due to age related complications. He is survived by wife, Chandraleela, daughter Janani.

His family said the 84-year-old Padma Shri recipient’s health declined rapidly following the sudden demise of his son, actor-director Manoj Bharathiraja, in March 2025.

A multiple national award winner known for his predominantly rural content, Bharathiraja shot to fame with his debut directorial venture ‘16 Vayathinile’ in 1977, starring Kamal Haasan, the late Sridevi and Rajinikanth.

His best-known films in Tamil include ‘Sigappu Rojakkal (1978), a gritty psychological thriller; ‘Alaigal Oivathillai’ (1981), a romance addressing caste and religious barriers; ‘Mudhal Mariyathai’ (1985), a narrative on platonic love featuring thespian Sivaji Ganesan; and ‘Karuthamma’ (1994), tackling the menace of female infanticide.

He later became a character actor, delivering memorable performances in Mani Ratnam’s political drama ‘Aayutha Ezhuthu’ (2004), ‘Pandianadu’ (2013), and the box-office hit ‘Thiruchitrambalam’ (2022).

Final rites and funeral arrangements are expected to be announced by the family later today.

“A director who rose from a rural background and infused his films with vibrant life and realism, Mr Bharathiraja left a distinct mark on Tamil cinema with numerous successful films,” CM Vijay said in a statement. He announced that state honours will be accorded to the veteran. —*PTI*

≫≫ More on Page 4

Cabinet reshuffles six senior officers

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

Following the formation of the new cabinet under Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, the Karnataka government on Wednesday reshuffled six senior officials, according to a government notification.

Rajender Kumar Kataria will concurrently hold the position of Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) for both the Revenue and Home departments.

Additional Chief Secretary Anjum Parwez, who heads the Forest, Ecology & Environment Department, will simultaneously hold ACS of the Public Works Department.

Mohan Raj KP has been transferred to the Social Welfare Department as its Secretary and will concurrently serve as the Housing Department Secretary.

Transport Commissioner Selvamani R will concurrently serve as Managing Director of KSRTC and State Mission Director for Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban).

Mahesh M, who was awaiting posting, has been appointed Managing Director of the State's Urban Water Supply and Drainage Board.

Venkatesh MV will hold dual roles as Registrar for Cooperative Societies and Secretary to the Government for the Planning, Programme Monitoring & Statistics Department.

— AGENCIES

Gold, cash worth Rs 12.5 lakh stolen from daily wager

Uttara Kannada, 10 JUNE

A 35-year-old daily wage worker, Parvati Narayan Patgar, lodged a complaint at the Honavar Police Station on 8 June saying gold jewellery and cash worth over Rs 12.5 lakh were stolen from a house in Devasthana Keri area of Honavar taluk.

The missing property includes gold ornaments weighing a total of 128 grams, valued at approximately 12.8 lakh, along with 50,000 in cash. According to the complaint, the theft occurred between 8 pm on 20 May and 6 pm on 7 June. Parvati stated that the jewellery and cash represented years of savings accumulated through hard work. She further informed the police that she strongly suspects Dhanush, a local resident, and requested that he be questioned in connection with the case and that efforts be made to recover the stolen property. *—SALAR NEWS*

Fake police dupe Belagavi woman of Rs 13.5 lakh

Belagavi, 10 JUNE

A n elderly woman was allegedly duped of gold ornaments worth Rs 13.5 lakh by a fraudster posing as a police officer in Tilakwadi, Belagavi. According to a complaint filed by Sunny Chandru Ahuja, his mother Usha Chandru Ahuja was walking near Panchamrut Hotel between 2.40 pm and 3 pm when the accused approached her, claiming to be a policeman. He warned her against wearing jewellery in public and persuaded her to remove her ornaments and place them in a paper packet. Pretending to secure the valuables, he appeared to return the packet to her handbag but allegedly fled with the jewellery. The accused similarly deceived another woman nearby. Around 90 grams of gold were stolen. Tilakwadi police have registered a case and are examining CCTV footage. *—SALAR NEWS*

BJP meets Guv over ₹39,000cr garbage 'scam'

LoP says govt getting Rs 10,000 crore kickback through tender awarded to Ramky Group

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

BJP leaders submitted a memorandum to Governor Thawarchand Gehlot on Wednesday, alleging that the State government had engineered a Rs 39,000-crore scam through a long-term garbage processing tender awarded to a private company.

Speaking to press after submitting the memorandum, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R Ashoka alleged that the government received a 10,000-crore kickback through the tender that the BWSSB awarded to the Delhi-based MSW Solutions Ltd linked to Ramky. Ramky Group had been involved in the infamous Mavallipura landfill project.

BJP leaders hold posters mocking Chief Minister DK Shivakumar over the BWWSB 'scam', on Wednesday. They met the Lokayukta and have asked the agency to investigate *—MOHAMMED ASAD*

Ashoka urged the Governor to launch an investigation into the tender process, claimed the contract had been awarded to a single company for 35 years at highly inflated rates.

He later lodged a complaint with the Lokaykuta and called for an impartial probe, alleging the scam was furthered by CM DK Shivakumar.

"This is the first time in the country's history that such a massive loot has taken place in the name of garbage. This is a 'High-Command black-money tender'," Ashoka told reporters at a press conference here.

Ashoka said that Bengaluru currently spends Rs 514 crore annually on garbage collection and transportation, Rs 380 crore on processing and disposal, and Rs 444 crore towards salaries of 11,000 civic workers, taking the total annual expenditure to Rs 1,344 crore.

Additionally, he noted that despite local contractors handling waste management work in the Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA) so far, the new Rs 39,000-crore tender was awarded to the private firm.

The City had been divided into North and South packages and recommendations provided by the government-owned RITES had been ignored.

Instead, he alleged, an unaccredited consultant had been engaged and the selected company had also been allowed to raise loans of up to Rs 1,500 crore with government land support. The Financial Department had also raised concerns over the proposal.

Additionally, Ashoka said the tipping fee, currently Rs 260 per tonne, had been increased to Rs 2,400 per tonne under the new tender. *—Salar News*

BJP leaders take out a procession to mark Narendra Modi's record term as Prime Minister, in Bengaluru, on Wednesday *—MOHAMMED ASAD*

Deve Gowda prioritises Modi ties over RS berth

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

Former prime minister HD Deve Gowda on Wednesday said that his relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi would continue irrespective of whether or not he was a Rajya Sabha member.

The two leaders' relationship was as a personal bond forged over the last decade, the JD(S) supremo said.

His remarks come after the Congress attacked the BJP for not nominating Deve Gowda to the Upper House and instead fielding its own candidate Prof M Nagaraja.

"People of this State and this country should not think that my relationship with Modi depends on a Rajya Sabha seat," Gowda said.

"In 2014, when Modi won 282 Lok Sabha seats and could have formed a government on his own, he still chose to form the NDA government along with allies," Deve Gowda said.

He noted that he had strongly criticised Modi over the Godhra issue (Gujarat riots) when the latter was chief minister of that state but said their association had grown over the years. "But after he became Prime Minister, our relationship developed. That relationship over the last 10 years was not built for the sake of a Rajya Sabha seat. It is a personal bond."

"Let us be frank. I do not think there is any other leader today who can compete with Modi," he added. "Internationally too, Modi is recognised as a major leader." *—PTI*

—MOHAMMED ASAD

(The) NDA bond will continue till my last breath

-HD Deve Gowda, former CM and PM

'HARASSED' TEEN FALLS TO DEATH AT SCHOOL

BIDAR, 10 JUNE

A 15-year-old student has died under suspicious circumstances at Janaseva Private School in in Bidar district in Karnataka, after falling from the fourth floor of the school building.

The deceased has been identified as Sameer, 15, a resident of Shantinagar. He was reportedly studying in Class 10 at Janaseva School.

Sameer's parents alleged that the school's staff were responsible for the tragedy, as they had reportedly subjected Sameer to harassment on a daily basis. Family members further alleged that after Sameer fell from the building, the school authorities neither informed the parents immediately nor sought their consent before sending the body for a post-mortem examination. The boy's parents and relatives gathered outside the mortuary at BRIMS Hospital and demanded strict action against school management. Police are investigatig. *—Salar News*

READY TO STEP INTO RS

AICC Secretary and RS candidate from Karnataka Mansoor Ali Khan was greeted by MLA and former minister Zameer Ahmed Khan at his residence, on Wednesday *—SALAR*

BJP conspired to reject MP's RS nomination: Siddaramaiah

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

Targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, former chief minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday claimed that the election machinery had "illegally" rejected the nomination of Congress candidate Meenakshi Natarajan for the Rajya Sabha election from Madhya Pradesh.

Siddaramaiah said it was "peak irony" that this happened on the day the BJP was celebrating Modi's "supposed long stay in power as a cooked-up milestone for Indian democracy."

The upcoming elections to three Rajya Sabha seats in Madhya Pradesh took a turn in Bhopal on Tuesday after Natarajan's nomination was rejected on charges of concealing information about a case in her affidavit.

"This is the real condition of democracy under Modi... (This) is a blatant illegality and a clear political conspiracy," the Congress Working Committee member posted on X.

Noting that the BJP had the numbers to win only two Rajya Sabha seats from Madhya Pradesh, the former CM said the party had nevertheless fielded a third candidate and then attempted horse-trading by allegedly offering huge sums of money to Congress legislators.

Furthermore, the grounds cited for rejecting her nomination were "completely illegal".

"There is no criminal case against Natarajan. A private complaint does not become a criminal case unless the court takes cognisance of it. A mere notice from a court is not a criminal case," he stated.

Through SIR and other methods, the BJP has been carrying out vote theft. Now, seat theft has been added to the same project. When the BJP cannot win through voters, it attacks the voter list. When it cannot win through numbers, it attacks the election process itself.

-Siddaramaiah, former chief minister

Similarly, Congress MLC Ramesh Babu stated that the rejection "reflects a clear collusion between the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the BJP".

The KPCC Media Wing Chairman added that the action supresses political competition. *—Salar News*

Tiger captured from ex-MLA's farm in Hunsur

MYSURU, 10 JUNE

In what officials described as the first recorded instance of a tiger walking directly into a trap, Forest Department personnel captured a tiger in Mysuru district on Wednesday. After tracking the animal's movements, officials set up a room cage, also known as a "Tumakuru cage" — a large, camouflaged trap designed to safely capture big cats — on a farm owned by former MLA HP Manjunath in Thattekere, near Hangodu village. The department had placed a cage three weeks ago after villagers reported cattle kills and tiger sightings. Officials said the tiger will be released into the wild in accordance with norms. *—Salar*

KPCC Prez backs HM's remarks on RSS registration

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPPC) President BK Hariprasad on Wednesday endorsed State Home Minister Priyank Kharge's demand that the should RSS "keep their registration documents ready".

He said Priyank was acting well within his constitutional rights.

"The RSS calls itself a patriotic and cultural organisation, hence it must be registered" Hariprasad told press in the City. "If they don't, it is for the Home Minister to decide what action to take."

Shortly after being appointed the Home Minister, Priyank allegedly receiving death threats and casteist remarks. He responded by asking the BJP to tell its "political superiors" -- the RSS -- to keep their registration documents ready.

Last year, Priyank had sought a ban on RSS activities in government spaces, and has repeatedly accused the organisation of indulging in "money laundering" and questioning its source of income and why it was exempted from income tax filings.

On Wednesday, he doubled down on the charge.

"I am not asking RSS workers to get recognised or registered, but only asking RSS to get registered," he told press. *—Agencies*

—MOHAMMED ASAD

In a country where all street vendors are registered, every temple has to give accounts, donations are accounted for, how is the RSS not registered?

-Priyank Kharge, Home Minister

EIGHT HOUSES COLLAPSE IN BELAGAVI

BELAGAVI, 10 JUNE

Heavy monsoon rains caused widespread damage in parts of Belagavi district, with Bailhongal town recording severe impact as eight mud houses collapsed in Kalmath Oni locality following incessant rainfall.

Deputy Commissioner Mohammed Roshan said no casualties were reported as the houses were unoccupied when they collapsed. He attributed the incident to continuous rain weakening the mud structures.

The collapse left several families displaced, while residents and traders criticised the delay in visits by civic authorities and elected representatives.

Bailhongal MLA Mahantesh Koujalgi said he returned from Bengaluru on Tuesday and inspected the affected areas with officials, directing them to expedite rehabilitation measures.

Temporary accommodation was arranged at a government hostel, though none of the affected families had shifted there. Koujalgi said Bailhongal received a record 97 mm of rainfall on Monday, surpassing the previous single-day high of 63 mm.

In another incident, a wall of the APMC complex in Ishwar Nagar collapsed onto two parked cars. The MLA blamed waterlogging on encroachments over stormwater drains and said corrective measures had been ordered. Compensation would be provided as per government norms, he added. *—Salar News*

WON'T SPARE ANYONE INVOLVED IN BITCOIN SCAM: PRIYANK

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

Home Minister Priyank Kharge on Wednesday said anyone found involved in the Bitcoin scam would have to face the consequences, and the government would not shield anyone in the named case.

Responding to questions from reporters over allegations that Youth Congress leader Mohammed Haris Nalapad, son of Congress MLA NA Haris, has reportedly been named as an accused in the Bitcoin case investigation, Priyank said that the chargesheet process is not yet complete, according to the information that he has recieved.

"Let the chargesheet come against him... The CC number is yet to be finalised. Let us see. There is absolutely no confusion on our part in this matter," he said.

"As per the information I have, many more people are involved. BJP leaders are also involved. Everything will come out," he asked.

The Bitcoin scam involves a local hacker, Srikrishna Ramesh alias Sriki, who allegedly connived with politicians and police and laundered stolen bitcoins.

"Whoever has done wrong must face the consequences," he said, adding, "We have acted transparently."

When reporters said the Enforcement Directorate had also acted against the accused, he said everyone knows whose puppet the ED and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is. *—PTI*

ALONG WITH FREE BUS PASSES

Give students free Metro passes: Commuters

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

The Bengaluru Metro Commuters Association (BMCA) welcomed the State government's decision to provide free bus passes to students across Karnataka and said that the same should be extended to the Namma Metro in the City as well.

In a statement on Wednesday, the BMCA noted that Bengaluru is growing into a "massive metropolis" and argued that providing free Metro tickets to students will "transform the City's educational and environmental landscape".

The association said that free Metro rides will allow school and college students from all socio-economic backgrounds to attend classes without significant financial burden on families and will cultivate a generation that views "public transit as their primary, preferred mode of travel, reducing long-term private vehicle dependency", and thereby reducing traffic congestion.

—AI

It cited a report by the by the Sustainable Transportation Lab at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), which claimed that the travelling by Metro reduces commute-related stress. Additionally, the study claimed that Metro rides would protect students from pollutants normally incurred by two-wheeler travel.

"Two-wheeler riders and pedestrians in Bengaluru face the highest, most toxic exposure to harmful particulate matter," the BMCA stated.

In one of his first decisions, CM DK Shivakumar had announced free bus passes to all students. The BMCA noted that students often travel by a mixture of Metro and bus, and argued that providing free Metro passes would "create a genuinely integrated public transit network, eliminating the 'broken link' in daily journey". *— Salar News*

Fire at WB govt building housing Jahangir's office

KOLKATA, 10 JUNE

A major fire broke out at a nine-storey government housing building near the South 24 Parganas Zilla Parishad office in Kolkata's Alipore area on Wednesday, prompting the deployment of 17 fire tenders. BJP alleged sabotage, claiming evidence was targeted for destruction. The building housed the office of arrested TMC leader Jahangir Khan. The blaze, first reported around 9.50 am, spread across the building. One person was rescued and no injuries were reported. Firefighters initially contained the blaze, but fresh flames erupted in the afternoon, intensifying operations. Officials said heavy smoke and limited access hampered firefighters. The cause is yet to be determined, though a short circuit has not been ruled out. *—PTI*

WB ex-sports minister gets HC relief in Messi case

KOLKATA, 10 JUNE

The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday granted interim protection to former West Bengal sports minister Aroop Biswas in a case related to the chaos at the city's Lionel Messi event in December. The order stays active till 17 August or further order, whichever is earlier. Justice Saugata Bhattacharyya directed Biswas to appear before the Bidhannagar police for questioning, submit his passport to the trial court and not to leave station without the court's permission. The high court also directed him to appear before the probe agency when asked. Complainant Satadru Dutta accused Biswas of extortion, intimidation, abuse of official and political influence, illegal diversion, monetisation and sale of complimentary tickets for wrongful gain. *—PTI*

—PTI

Bihar CM transfers Rs 1,100 each to 94L beneficiaries

PATNA, 10 JUNE

Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary on Wednesday transferred Rs 1,100 each to the bank accounts of over 94 lakh beneficiaries under six social security schemes, marking Prime Minister Narendra Modi becoming the country's longest-serving PM. The beneficiaries include seniors, widows and persons with disabilities. The state government had increased the monthly pension from Rs 400 to Rs 1,100 last year. Choudhary said social security for poor and vulnerable sections remained a key responsibility of the government. He also announced that pensions would now be credited on the 10th of every month and urged eligible citizens, over 60 years, to apply for benefits. *—PTI*

UP court orders fresh hearing for Rahul's Ram claims

VARANASI, 10 JUNE

A Varanasi MP-MLA court has ordered a fresh hearing in a complaint against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over alleged remarks made at Brown University in the US in 2025 describing Lord Ram as a mythological figure. The complaint, which alleges the remarks hurt the religious sentiments of Hindus, had been earlier dismissed by an Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate court on the grounds that the statement was made abroad and required prior sanction from the central government for prosecution. Allowing a revision petition, Judge Yajurved Vikram Singh set aside the order, holding that such sanction was not required at the stage of entertaining the complaint. The court also directed the lower court to reconsider the matter in accordance with the law. *—PTI*

TMC crisis: MP Sushmita Dev resigns from RS

Dev, who moved from Cong to TMC in 2021, likely to join BJP

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Sushmita Dev on Wednesday resigned from the party and the Rajya Sabha, dealing another setback to the Mamata Banerjee-led outfit amid internal turmoil following its defeat in the West Bengal Assembly elections.

Rajya Sabha Chairman C P Radhakrishnan accepted her resignation from RS.

Sources said Dev, who left the Congress in 2021 to join the TMC, is likely to join the BJP. The speculation gained momentum after she met Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma shortly after resigning.

Dev, however, declined to comment on her future political plans or on Banerjee. "It's my individual decision, what kind of politics I want to do and who should be my leader. I have my reasons and that's why I have taken my decision," she said. On reports of joining the BJP, she added: "When I take a decision I will let you know."

Ex-TMC MP Sushmita Dev meets Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma in New Delhi, before resigning *-PTI*

She said her resignation was driven by personal and political reasons, adding that everyone has the right to decide what kind of politics they wish to pursue.

The daughter of former Union minister and Congress leader Santosh Mohan Dev, she previously represented Assam's Silchar constituency in the Lok Sabha and served as president of the All India Mahila Congress.

Dev is the second TMC Rajya Sabha MP to resign this week after Sukhendu Sekhar Ray quit both the party and the Upper House.

Sources claimed that several TMC MPs were considering forming a separate group and aligning with the ruling NDA. They further said a majority of the party's 80 MLAs had already formed a separate bloc led by Ritabrata Banerjee, who has emerged as Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly. *—PTI*

Swapan gets finance; Adhikari keeps home, law

KOLKATA, 10 JUNE

BJP government in West Bengal on Wednesday allocated portfolios to ministers inducted during its recent cabinet expansion, with **Swapan Dasgupta** taking charge of finance and the education sector split between two leaders associated with the RSS.

Veteran politician Tapas Roy, who joined BJP from the TMC in 2024, was given industries and commerce. Suri MLA Jagannath Chattopadhyay was assigned higher education, while North Bengal leader Dipak Barman took school education.

The education department split follows the school recruitment scam fallout and reflects the BJP's reform focus.

Senior party leaders have advocated changes curricula with a greater focus on India's civilisational heritage.

CM Suvendu Adhikari retained home, law, land reforms, power, information and culture, personnel and administrative reforms, refugee relief and hill affairs.

Sharadwat Mukherjee was given health, Dudh Kumar Mondal agriculture, Shankar Ghosh tourism and parliamentary affairs, and Arjun Singh labour and transport. Kalyan Chakraborty took IT, electronics, science and technology, biotechnology, food processing and horticulture.

Manoj Kumar Oraon (forest), Gouri Shankar Ghosh (backward classes welfare), Arup Kumar Das (irrigation and waterways), Ajoy Poddar (public health engineering), Indranil Khan (sports, youth affairs and consumer affairs), Malati Rava Roy (women and child development) and Rajesh Mahata (animal and fisheries).

The allocations complete the 41-member council as BJP's attempt to balance governance, regional representation and organisational priorities in post-TMC Bengal. *—PTI*

CJP plans nationwide protest to oust Pradhan

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Asserting that India's youngsters are not scared of questioning the government, the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) said on Wednesday that it would launch an "indefinite sit-in" at Jantar Mantar from 20 June if Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan does not step down.

The CJP had led a protest here last week demanding the minister's resignation.

The CJP also announced that it would hold protests in different cities, starting with Pune on 11 June, followed by Lucknow, Amritsar, Bengaluru, Jaipur and Hyderabad. The CJP said the protests will continue until Pradhan resigns.

Calling the alleged irregularities in the conduct of examinations a national issue affecting millions of young people, the CJP said, "The Education Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan, has failed to take responsibility for these repeated failures."

Calling it a movement to defend the integrity of India's education system and ensure that no student is forced to pay the price for institutional failure, the CJP invited students, parents, teachers and citizens from all over the country to join the "struggle for accountability and justice".

In a post on X, CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke said that climate activist Sonam Wangchuk would join the protest in Pune.

The CJP has emerged in recent weeks as a student and youth-led movement protesting against alleged irregularities in competitive examinations and broader issues in the education system.

The group has drawn attention through social-media campaigns and public demonstrations, including the recent protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar that attracted significant participation. *—PTI*

CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke *—PTI*

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VIJAY MEETS SONIA, RAHUL

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Wednesday met Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi and Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi at Sonia's 10 Janpath residence in the national capital. Vijay is on a three-day visit to Delhi and is expected to attend the NITI Aayog Governing Council meeting on Thursday. The visit marks his second trip to New Delhi since assuming office as chief minister in May *—PTI*

Order rejecting Natarajan's RS nomination egregious: Cong to EC

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Congress on Wednesday met the Election Commission after its Madhya Pradesh candidate **Meenakshi Natarajan**'s nomination for the Rajya Sabha polls was rejected, saying the order was "egregious" and should be set aside.

Top party leaders, including KC Venugopal, Jairam Ramesh and Abhishek Singhvi, along with Natarajan, met the Commission.

Singhvi said that Natarajan was summoned by court before cognizanc of any charges against her was taken. He added that since without cognizance, no criminal case exists in the eyes of the law, as the nomination rejection order cited. He said that the Returning Officer (RO) had passed a "perverse" order and added that the poll body must turn over the order.

"We hope and trust that the Election Commission will realize that this creates a very bad, distorted, non-level playing field," Singhvi said.

The 18 June elections for three Rajya Sabha seats in Madhya Pradesh took a dramatic turn on Tuesday when the nomination of Natarajan was rejected over concealing information in the affidavit.

An official of the Madhya Pradesh Assembly said BJP candidate Mahesh Kewat filed the complaint. After hearing arguments from both sides, the returning officer rejected Natarajan's nomination, added the official. *—PTI*

Free bus travel for women in Keralam from 15 June

T'PURAM, 10 JUNE

Keralam Chief Minister VD Satheesan on Wednesday said the Cabinet has decided that the Indira guarantee of free bus travel for women will initially be available on KSRTC's ordinary services from 15 June.

Satheesan said that the concession, called 'Priyadarshini', in its current format will cost the KSRTC over Rs 60 crore per month or around Rs 800 crore annually and will be borne by the state government. It will be available for women of all ages and all walks of life, irrespective of their financial background or income, and for transgender women also.

"Once the financial health of KSRTC improves by increasing its revenue generation, we will consider moving to the next phase of the initiative," said the CM.

The five Indira guarantees, announced by Rahul Gandhi during the assembly poll campaign in March this year, comprised free KSRTC bus travel for women, a monthly stipend of Rs 1,000 for girl students in colleges, an increase in welfare pension to Rs 3,000, health insurance coverage up to Rs 25 lakh per household, and interest-free loans of up to Rs 5 lakh for young entrepreneurs. *—PTI*

Navy to get 20 satellite system jammers worth Rs 449 cr

The agreement was signed in Delhi in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh *—X/SPOKESPERSONMOD*

NEW DELHI, 10 JUN

The Defence Ministry on Wednesday signed a Rs 449 crore contract with Bengaluru-based Accord Software and Systems Private Ltd (ASSPL) for 20 Enhanced Capability Global Navigation Satellite System (ECGNSS) jammers for the Indian Navy.

The contract mandates a minimum indigenous content of 75 per cent.

According to the ministry, the ECGNSS jammers will strengthen the Navy's electronic warfare capabilities and support warship safety in complex and contested maritime environments.

The systems are designed to degrade an adversary's GNSS receiver performance by disrupting satellite signal acquisition and tracking. They also possess spoofing and deceptive jamming capabilities, to feed false positioning and timing data to hostile systems.

Unlike conventional jammers that primarily block frequencies through noise interference, the new systems can manipulate navigation signals, making them more effective in electronic warfare scenarios.

The Defence Ministry said the induction of the ECGNSS jammers would enhance the operational readiness of naval platforms and improve fleet survivability in multi-threat environments where electronic warfare capabilities are extensively employed by potential adversaries. *—PTI*

SHARAD PAWAR'S TAKE

'No comparison between Modi & Nehru'

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

NCP (SP) Chief Sharad Pawar on Wednesday said former prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's contribution to India's freedom and nation-building could never be forgotten, asserting that there could be no comparison between him and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking at his party's 27th foundation day in Mumbai, Pawar noted that Modi had become the country's longest-serving prime minister but said Nehru's sacrifices, including years spent in jail during the freedom movement under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, set him apart.

Pawar also criticised the BJP-led government, accusing it of ignoring the concerns of farmers, educated unemployed youth and women. He said the country was facing several challenges and claimed India's foreign policy was not up to the mark.

The veteran leader also attacked Maharashtra minister Girish Mahajan for remarks on Operation Blue Star and former prime ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. Calling Mahajan's comments unacceptable, Pawar said Indira Gandhi never compromised on India's security and prestige. He described Operation Blue Star as a difficult decision taken in the national interest.

NCP (SP) Chief Sharad Pawar said ex-PM Jawaharlal Nehru's contribution to India's freedom and nation-building could never be forgotten and there could be no comparison between him and PM Modi *—PTI*

Mahajan recently termed the 1984 Army operation at the Golden Temple a "black day" and compared it to an invasion by Afghan ruler Ahmad Shah Abdali, triggering demands from opposition parties for his dismissal.

Referring to full-page newspaper advertisements published by the Sunetra Pawar-led NCP faction, Pawar remarked on the substantial cost involved, saying it was the first time the party had resorted to such publicity.

NCP split in 2023 after Ajit Pawar joined the Mahayuti government. Following his death in a plane crash earlier this year, his wife Sunetra Pawar became Deputy Chief Minister and president of the ruling NCP faction. *—PTI*

6 Naga captives found dead after Kukis' release

IMPHAL, 10 JUNE

The bodies of six Naga men abducted nearly a month ago in Manipur have been recovered, police said on Wednesday, a day after 14 Kuki hostages were released.

Manipur Police said the remains were found in Kangpokpi district after a nearly 24-hour search operation involving around 450 personnel from the police, CRPF, Assam Rifles, sniffer dogs and forensic experts. The deceased are may be among those abducted from Leilon Vaiphei on 13 May.

The abductions occurred after three church leaders were killed and five others injured in an ambush while returning from a meeting in Churachandpur to Kangpokpi. Another civilian was killed and his wife injured in Noney district on the same day.

At least 48 civilians from the Kuki and Naga communities were taken hostage across Kangpokpi and Senapati districts following the violence. The United Naga Council confirmed on Tuesday that 14 Kuki hostages had been released.

The chief ministers of Nagaland and Meghalaya had welcomed the release and appealed for the safe return of the six Naga hostages. *—PTI*

—PTI

Vizag Steel Plant explosion toll rises to 9

VISAKHAPATNAM, 10 JUNE

The death toll from the 8 June explosion at the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant rose to nine on Wednesday. District Joint Collector G Vidhyadhari said the latest victim, Pydiraju, died at 8.17am with nearly 90 per cent burns. Eight were killed and six injured in the blast at Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd. YSRCP chief and former Andhra Pradesh chief minister Jagan Mohan Reddy blamed the TDP-led NDA government, alleging neglect of safety standards, maintenance and employee welfare. Jagan claimed the plant's workforce had fallen from 28,000 to 16,000 in recent years. He also alleged salary delays, withdrawal of benefits and poor conditions. IT Minister Nara Lokesh refuted these claims. Probe is on. *—PTI*

28 Kerala tourists suffer from food poisoning in Goa

PANAJI, 10 JUNE

As many as 28 tourists from Kerala complained of food poisoning during their visit to Goa, an official said on Wednesday. The tourists were part of the same group holidaying in Goa. They had food at a restaurant in Old Goa, after which they started complaining of food poisoning, South Goa District Hospital's medical superintendent Dr Rajendra Borkar told reporters. They were treated at the hospital on Tuesday night. Out of 28 tourists, three were advised admission, but they took the discharge against medical advice, he said. *—PTI*

—ANI

FIR against Abhijit stayed over 'shayari' on scribes

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

A Delhi court has stayed a magistrate's order directing the registration of an FIR against political commentator Abhijit Iyer Mitra over allegedly derogatory social media posts targeting women journalists associated with Newslaundry. Additional Sessions Judge Purshotam Pathak, hearing Mitra's revision petition, stayed the April 22 order pending final disposal of the case. In an order dated 9 June, the court noted that the disputed remarks were written in the form of "shayari" and did not specifically name any individual. The court said police assistance may be required to ascertain the alleged motive behind the posts. Complainants argued the remarks were sexually coloured, derogatory and an attack on the journalists' dignity. *—PTI*

CBI arrests Delhi cop in Rs 3 crore bribery case

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

The CBI has arrested a Delhi Police Crime Branch inspector and a middleman for allegedly demanding a Rs 3 crore bribe from a Puducherry-based businessman to influence an ongoing fake drug manufacturing case investigation. Inspector Pradeep Singh and Rajkumar were caught in a trap on Monday, with Rs 24.70 lakh recovered from them. The agency has also named businessman N Raja in its FIR. A senior public servant, understood to be a regional director of the DGCA, is under scrutiny for allegedly promising a favourable probe in return for the bribe. Investigators said part of the money was routed through hawala channels. Further investigation is underway. *—PTI*

'Khalistanis' send bomb threat to RSS in M'rashtra, Gujarat

CMOs, civic HQs also threatened

MUMBAI/NAGPUR/PUNE, 10 JUNE

Bomb threat emails purportedly sent in the name of the "Khalistan National Army" triggered security alerts across Maharashtra and Gujarat on Wednesday, targeting RSS offices, Chief Ministers' Offices (CMOs), civic headquarters and other key establishments, prompting evacuations and extensive searches.

In Maharashtra, threat emails were sent to the RSS headquarters in Nagpur, the CMO, and mayoral offices in Mumbai and Pune. Nagpur Mayor Neeta Thakre received an email claiming explosives had been planted at the RSS headquarters in Mahal and the Hedgewar Smruti Bhavan in Reshimbagh. Searches by Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad (BDDS) personnel found nothing suspicious.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation received emails warning of blasts at the mayor's office, the CMO, the BSE building and civic offices. Similar threats prompted the evacuation of the Pune Municipal Corporation headquarters, with entry barred until further orders. The emails also threatened attacks on the Vidhan Bhavan and RSS facilities.

Police personnel carry out security checks in Maharashtra —ANI

In Gujarat, a similar email threatened blasts at the Gujarat CMO in Gandhinagar, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation headquarters and an RSS office in Ahmedabad's Maninagar area at specified times. The AMC headquarters was evacuated while police, BDDS and fire brigade teams carried out searches.

Director General of Police GS Malik said investigators found the email had been sent using a VPN, with internet traffic routed through the United States. Gujarat Chief Secretary M K Das said all necessary precautions had been taken.

No suspicious objects were found at any of the locations in either state. Police have launched investigations to trace the source of the threats and urged the public not to panic. *—PTI*

TRADERS FEAR LOSS

Varanasi to shift meat shops outside city before Sawan

VARANASI, 10 JUNE

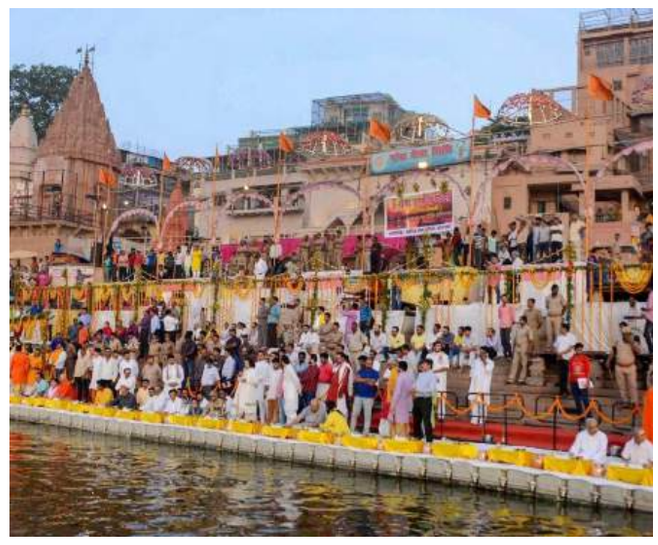
The Varanasi Municipal Corporation has decided to relocate all meat, fish and poultry shops outside city limits before the commencement of the holy month of Sawan, a move that has sparked mixed reactions among residents, traders and political leaders.

Municipal Corporation Public Relations Officer Sandeep Srivastava said around 350-400 meat, fish and poultry shops currently operate within the city. Five sites — Ramnagar, Sujabad, Ganeshpur, Awaleshpur and Shivpur — have been identified on the outskirts for their relocation.

Srivastava said meat traders face losses every year as shops within the city are usually shut during Sawan. Relocating them outside municipal limits would allow businesses to continue operating and minimise disruption to livelihoods.

The move has found support among some residents. Ajay Sharma welcomed the decision, saying Varanasi, revered as the abode of Lord Vishwanath, attracts millions of devotees annually. He also called for liquor shops to be shifted outside the Kashi region.

However, others criticised the plan. Subrata Mukherjee, a resident of Bengali Tola, said fish and meat are an integral part of the daily diet and traditions of many families. He questioned why meat shops were being targeted while liquor outlets continued to operate.



- Subrata Mukherjee, a resident of Bengali Tola, said fish and meat are an integral part of the daily diet and traditions of many families. He questioned why meat shops were being targeted while liquor outlets continued to operate

Anish Singh of Manduadih said the relocation would inconvenience consumers across communities and could increase costs while benefiting online meat delivery services.

District Youth Congress president said authorities must safeguard traders' livelihoods and ensure adequate alternative arrangements.

Meat trader Sahil warned that relocating shops to the outskirts could reduce footfall and sales, affecting businesses dependent on regular customers. *—PTI*

HC restores pilot's licence revoked 15 yrs ago

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

In a relief to a 61-year-old pilot, the Bombay High Court has quashed a 2011 Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) order suspending his license, noting the order was "illegal and unsustainable" as it violated the principles of natural justice by not granting him a hearing.

A bench of Justices Manish Pitale and Shreeram Shirsat in the judgment passed on Monday said the DGCA's licensing authority neither issued a show-cause notice to Varma nor granted him a hearing in person before taking the decision to suspend his license. The aircraft rules clearly envisage that before a person is disqualified from holding or obtaining a license, an opportunity of being heard has to be given.

The bench also noted that though the FIR was lodged in 2011 and a chargesheet was also filed, no charge has been framed against Varma to date.

The DGCA on March 12, 2011, suspended Jeetendra Krishna Varma's Airline Transport Pilot License, considered the highest level of pilot license, after an FIR was lodged against him in Delhi for allegedly procuring the license based on forged documents.

Varma, then aged 46, moved the high court, challenging the DGCA's order suspending his license under provisions of the Aircraft Rules.

He also said that after his license was suspended, he was terminated from his job. He had filed a petition in HC challenging the termination order. In February 2019, the high court set aside the termination. *—PTI*

SC directs Kerala govt to take custody of India's 'tallest' elephant

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Supreme Court has directed the Kerala government to take temporary custody of Raman, Kerala's tallest captive elephant, observing that the welfare of "voiceless animals" is of paramount importance.

Standing 10 feet 6 inches tall, Raman is regarded as India's tallest living captive elephant and is famed for opening the Thrissur Pooram festival.

A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma ordered that Raman be housed in a rehabilitation centre, noting allegations that the elephant had been commercially exploited through ceremonial processions.

The court was hearing a contempt petition filed by Jayakrishna Menon, who claimed Raman belonged to the Mata Amritanandamayi Mutt and had only been entrusted to Krishnankutty for care and upkeep.

Holding Krishnankutty guilty of contempt for wilfully violating an undertaking given to the apex court, the bench imposed a fine of Rs 2,000. It said courts could not remain "mute spectators" in matters concerning animal welfare.

The court clarified that the transfer of custody was temporary and subject to its final decision.

State authorities were discharged from contempt proceedings after the court noted their efforts to conduct a medical inspection. Krishnankutty maintained that Raman had been lawfully transferred to him through gift deeds and that he had cared for the elephant for over a decade. *—PTI*

UK police provide security to former Bombay HC judge

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

UK police have provided security to former Bombay High Court judge Justice Gautam Patel and his family after complaints of threats linked to a high-profile judgment concerning the Dawoodi Bohra community.

CJI Surya Kant raised the matter with Indian High Commissioner P Kumaran in the UK. Kumaran assured the CJI that adequate security measures would be in place.

This comes days after Justice Patel revealed that a threatening letter had been delivered to his daughter's residence in London and him. The threats are linked to a landmark 2024 judgment delivered by Justice Patel on the succession and title of the Syedna, the spiritual leader of the million-strong Dawoodi Bohra community. The case is under appeal.

One letter reportedly accused the judge of delivering a "fraudulent" verdict and demanded that he post a YouTube video retracting it. *—PTI*

'Tax evasion' case: Anil gets protection from coercive action

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

The Bombay High Court has granted interim protection from prosecution and penalty to industrialist Anil Ambani in an alleged tax evasion case, while admitting his petition challenging the constitutional validity of provisions of the Black Money Act.

Ambani, in his plea, said certain provisions of the (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015, were "ultra vires" (beyond the powers/violative) to the Constitution of India. He also said that the Black Money Act was enacted in 2015, and the alleged transactions precede it, being of assessment years 2006-2007 and 2010-2011.

The court directed the Union government to file its affidavit in response to the plea."... we clarify that no coercive action shall be taken against the petitioner, including that of prosecution and penalty, till the hearing and final disposal of this writ petition," the HC said.

The Income Tax department issued a notice to Ambani on August 8, 2022, for allegedly evading Rs 420 crore in taxes on undisclosed funds of more than Rs 814 crore held in two Swiss bank accounts. *—PTI*

SC SETS ASIDE POCSO CONVICTION OF MAN WHO MARRIED VICTIM

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Invoking its extraordinary authority under Article 142 of the Constitution, the Supreme Court has quashed the conviction of a man sentenced under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act after noting the victim has married the accused on attaining the age of majority.

Article 142 grants the court the "extraordinary" power to pass any decree or order necessary to secure "complete justice" in a pending case.

The man and the woman had met while she was studying in class 12. When he refused to marry her, she had filed a complaint resulting in him being sentenced to 10 years under the POCSO Act for having sex with a minor.

After the woman's first marriage broke up, the man reconciled with her while out on bail. They both married.

Thereafter the woman moved the Madras High Court seeking to set aside her husband's conviction. The high court rejected her plea. *—PTI*

Kathua fire leaves several homeless

JAMMU, 10 JUNE

A massive fire destroyed nearly two dozen hutments housing migrant workers in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district early on Wednesday, leaving several families homeless and causing extensive property damage, officials said.

The blaze broke out around 4 am in a cluster of temporary dwellings near a scrapyard at Maggar Khad in Chak Gota. It spread rapidly through the highly combustible structures, reducing them to ashes.

No casualties were reported, but household goods, clothes, utensils, three motorcycles and other essential belongings were destroyed. Most of the affected residents were migrant rag-pickers from Bihar.

Anita Devi, one of the victims, said her family escaped safely after neighbours raised the alarm. "We have nothing left except the clothes we were wearing," she said, appealing for government assistance and support to rebuild their lives.

FOREST BLAZE SPARKS MINE BLASTS

In a separate incident, a forest fire in Rajouri district triggered a series of landmine explosions along the Line of Control in the Keri sector. Officials said loud blasts were heard as the fire spread through dry vegetation, but no casualties were reported.Forest fires were also reported from parts of Rajouri, Reasi and Udhampur districts. Authorities urged people to avoid activities that could spark fires during the dry summer season. *—PTI*

ACE DIRECTOR BIDS ADIEU

Bharathiraja: Titan who injected rural realism in TN films

CHENNAI, 10 JUNE

Veteran filmmaker, screenwriter and actor P Bharathiraja, the visionary director who revolutionised Tamil cinema by bringing rural realism to the big screen, died at his Chennai residence on Wednesday after a prolonged illness. He was 84.

The National Award-winning filmmaker, fondly known as 'Iyakkunar Imayam' (The Everest of Directors), had been suffering from age-related ailments and respiratory complications. Family associates said his health deteriorated further following the death of his son, actor-director Manoj Bharathiraja, in March 2025.

Born Chinnasamy in Theni district in 1941, Bharathiraja transformed South Indian cinema with his 1977 directorial debut, '16 Vayathinile'. Starring Kamal Haasan, Rajinikanth and Sridevi, the film broke away from studio-bound filmmaking and introduced audiences to authentic village life, setting a new benchmark for commercial cinema.

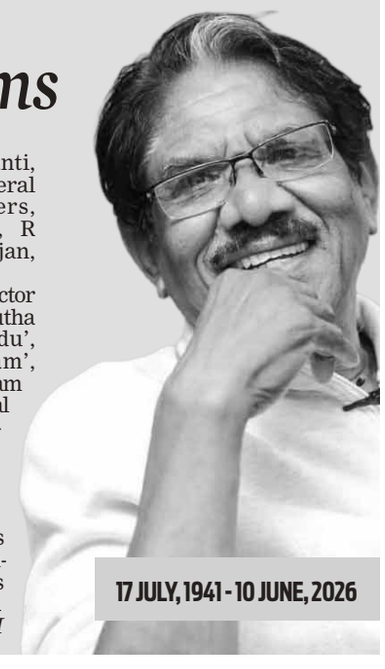
Over a career spanning nearly five decades, he directed more than 40 films in Tamil, Telugu and Hindi. His acclaimed works included 'Sigappu Rojakkal' (1978), 'Alaigal Oivathillai' (1981), 'Mudhal Mariyathai' (1985) and 'Karuthamma' (1994), while his Telugu film 'Seethakoka Chiluka' won a National Film Award.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay pays tributes to director P Bharathiraja, who died on Wednesday —PTI

Widely regarded as a star-maker, Bharathiraja launched the careers of actors including Radikaa, Revathi, Radha, Rekha, Vijayashanti, Karthik and Pandian. Several successful filmmakers, including K Bhagyaraj, R Parthiban and Pandiarajan, also trained under him.

He earned acclaim as an actor in films such as 'Aayutha Ezhuthu', 'Pandianadu', 'Thiruchi trambalam', 'Maharaja' and the Malayalam film 'Thudarum'. His final directorial work was a segment in the 2023 anthology 'Modern Love Chennai'.

A Padma Shri awardee, Bharathiraja won six National Film Awards and numerous state honours. He is survived by his wife Chandraleela and daughter Janani. *—PTI*



PMO HAILS PM MODI'S HISTORIC MILESTONE

Construction of the world's highest railway arch bridge over the Chenab river, the launch of the first Vande Bharat Sleeper train, and 99.6 per cent electrification of the broad-gauge network are among the major achievements highlighted by the government during its 12 years in office.

A booklet released by the government to mark the occasion lists several significant launches and developments in the field of rail infrastructure across the country.

Highlighting the 99.6 per cent electrification of the broad-gauge railway network, which makes India one of the most highly electrified railway systems in the world, the government claimed that this achievement is a cornerstone of the nation's sustainable transportation.

It said the initiative has helped reduce carbon emissions and strengthened the country's commitment to the Net Zero goal. The booklet stated that 741 crore passengers were served by the railways in 2025–26 and that national capacity has been enhanced with the introduction of premium train services such as Vande Bharat, Namo Bharat and Tejas.

The government claimed that following the stellar debut of the Vande Bharat Sleeper train, over 1.2 lakh passengers travelled on the service in its first three months, recording 100 per cent occupancy.

Celebrating the construction and operationalisation of the world's highest railway arch bridge, standing 359 metres above the Chenab River, the government said the structure is a state-of-the-art engineering marvel showcasing India's technological prowess. It noted that the bridge stands 35 metres taller than the Eiffel Tower.

The bridge, India's first blast-resistant railway bridge developed with assistance from DRDO, has facilitated direct rail connectivity between Jammu and Srinagar, reducing travel time significantly.

The government also highlighted the Anji Khad Bridge, India's first cable-stayed railway bridge, which is operational on the Jammu–Srinagar route and provides a crucial link in the Katra–Banihal section of the Udhampur–Srinagar–Baramulla Rail Link.

"Located around 80 kilometres from Jammu, the bridge stands 331 metres above the Anji River valley," it said.

According to the government, 36,000 km of new railway tracks have been laid since 2014, while 484 km of tunnels have been constructed, compared with only 125 km built before 2014.

Providing a glimpse of India's first bullet train project, the government said the 508-km Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Project, currently under construction, spans Gujarat, Maharashtra and Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu.

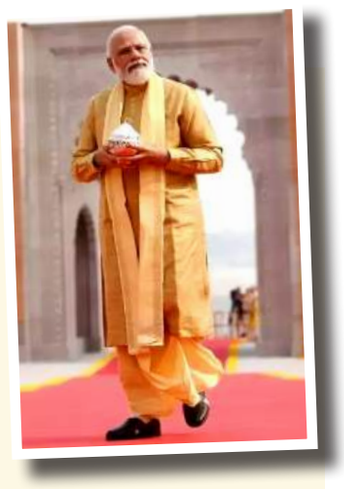
The government further said that all civil works, including river bridges, have been completed on the 97-km Surat–Vapi section, while nearly 5 km of the 21-km undersea tunnel has also been completed.

Outlining its initiatives in rail infrastructure development in the Northeast, the government said that more than 4,170 km of railway lines have been electrified in the region, achieving over 96 per cent electrification.

It said 100 per cent railway electrification has been achieved in Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura and Mizoram. Additionally, investments worth Rs 95,000 crore have been made in the northeastern railway.

The government described the operation of the first freight train to Manipur in 2022, the first freight train to Meghalaya in 2023, and the first passenger train to Mizoram in 2025 as landmark achievements, marking the first such developments since Independence. —*ANI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi receives standing ovation from the Union Ministers during a cabinet meeting, in New Delhi. The cabinet passed a resolution applauding PM Modi for being the longest serving elected prime minister —PTI



From our cooperation on technology, mobility, security and defence all the way to the mother of all trade deals. Thank you for all that we have achieved together.

-Ursula von der Leyen, EU President

It has been a pleasure to meet again in Rome in recent weeks and to launch together a Special Strategic Partnership that looks to the future to create new opportunities for our Nations

-Giorgia Meloni, Italian PM

The Maldives looks forward to further strengthening cooperation with India, guided by mutual respect, sovereign equality, and shared interests.

- Mohamed Muizzu, Maldivian President

This achievement stands as a testament to his years of dedicated public service and leadership in advancing India's development, prosperity and standing on the global stage

-Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia Prime Minister

A true statesman who has transformed India's economy and standing in the world. Proud of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership we built together

- Scott Morrison, Australian Prime Minister

During the rule of Modi, 250 million people have been pulled out of poverty. This is a very important indicator for India

-Dmitry Peskov, Kremlin spokesman

Dubiously invented milestone: Cong fumes

The Congress on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying he may have passed a "self-proclaimed and dubiously invented" milestone but he is a "millstone" around India's neck, presiding over the "murder of democracy".

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said Jawaharlal Nehru became prime minister of India on 15 August, 1947 presiding over a stellar Cabinet - the likes of which have rarely been seen in the world.

Over the next five years, modern India came into being, he said on X. "Over 560 princely states were integrated peacefully into the Indian Union, the Constitution of India was debated and adopted, zamindari was abolished, reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were put in place, a number of multipurpose irrigation-cum-power projects were launched, the infrastructure for science and technology capability was established (including in nuclear energy), and India emerged as a force in global affairs," Ramesh said.

Electoral rolls bearing 170 million registered voters were prepared to ensure universal adult franchise and free India's first General Elections were held between October 1951 and February 1952, he said.

"The 1947-52 record of achievements of India with Nehru as PM and in which stalwarts like Sardar Patel, Dr Ambedkar, Dr Rajendra Prasad, C Rajagopalachari, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad played such a pivotal role is now sought to be erased by Mr Modi who has a pathological fixation on Nehru," the Congress General Secretary in-charge Communications alleged.

- The same establishments of democracy - an independent Election Commission and a sacrosanct voter list - are now threatened, the Congress claimed.

The same establishments of democracy - an independent Election Commission and a sacrosanct voter list - are now threatened, he claimed.

"Scientific temper has been erased through the destruction of our educational institutions as exposed most recently by the NEET-CBSE scandals. Reservations for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes have been weakened through privatisation and nefarious instruments like 'Not Found Suitable'," Ramesh said.

And while Nehru won in 1952, 1957, and 1962 with a hugely decisive majority, Modi "did not secure even a simple majority by a considerable margin in 2024 and had to hurriedly convene a NDA meeting bypassing the BJP Parliamentary Party to anoint himself as PM," Ramesh said, adding that "2024 was most certainly not a mandate for him".

Former prime minister Indira Gandhi had a tenure of 14 years, more than that of Modi, but her prime ministership was not uninterrupted. —*PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi poses after a landslide victory in the general elections in 2014 —PTI

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

What's delaying Nat'l Sports Awards? Athletes confused, ministry mum

- It is now well past one year since the last ceremony and the recommendations for the 2025-26 honours were made in December 2025. As per existing norms, they were to be formally announced by the Sports Ministry within a week of the finalisation with minor tweaks, if needed.

There is simmering disquiet in India's sporting circles these days and at the heart of it is an unprecedented delay.

The annual celebration of India's sporting excellence, the National Sports Awards, are yet to be announced even though the selection committee gave its recommendations six months ago.

The Sports Ministry, whose seal of approval turns recommended names into award winners, has attributed the situation to a "re-evaluation of names picked for the Arjuna awards". According to well-placed Ministry sources, the lingering wait is a matter of procedure and necessary to "preserve the integrity of the awards".

However, that explanation is hardly a consolation. "It is unfortunate that no announcement has come so far. It is de-motivating for the athletes, especially because unofficially most people come to know whether they have been shortlisted or not," lamented an Olympic-medal winning former Khel Ratna awardee in a conversation with PTI.

The date of the ceremony, held at the majestic Rashtrapati Bhavan, has not been a fixed one for quite a while now.

It was traditionally slated for 29 August to commemorate the National Sports Day, which is also the birth anniversary of one of India's greatest sportspersons -- hockey wizard Major Dhyan Chand.

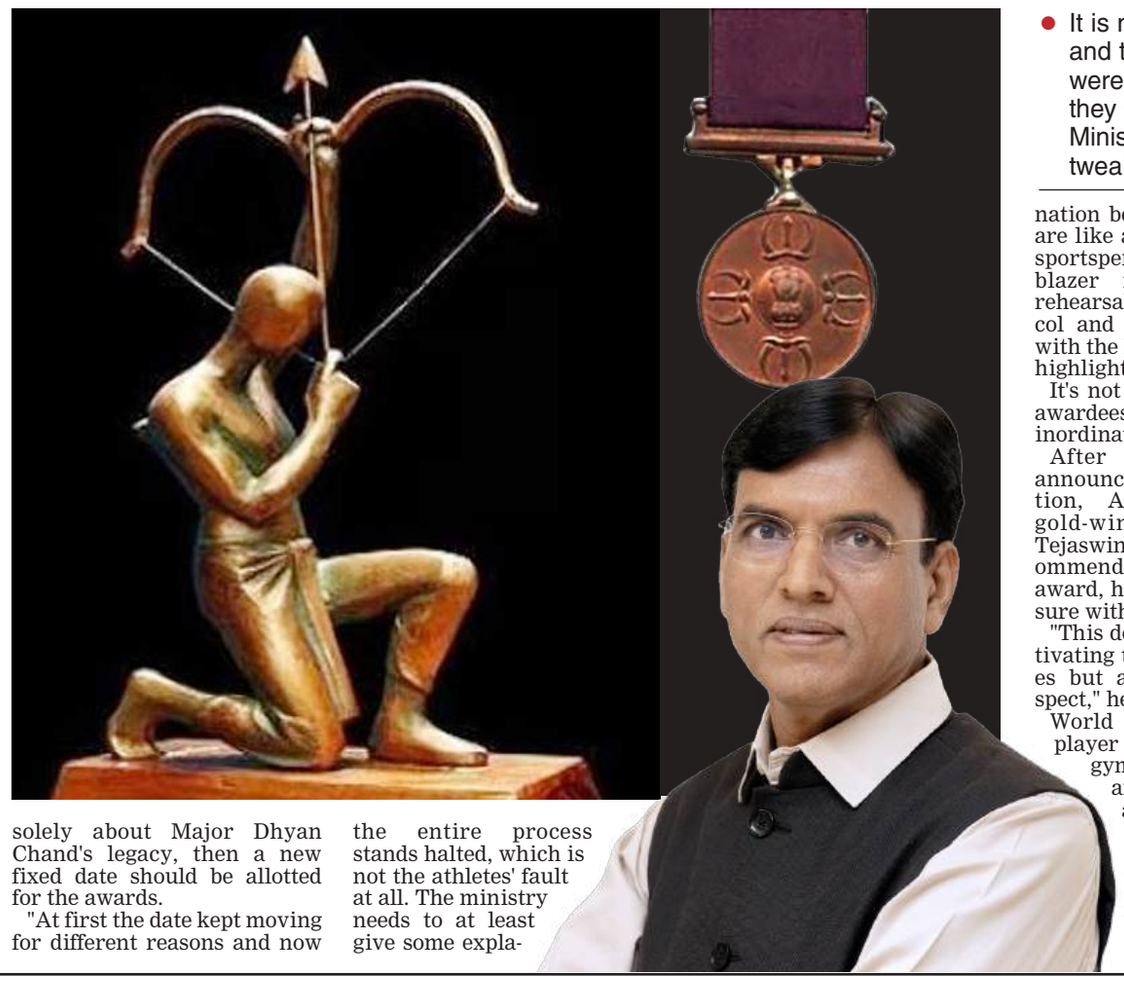
However, after the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, when the ceremony was conducted virtually due to health protocols in place, the date is no longer locked. More than once, it has been pushed a couple of months after 29 August to accommodate the Olympic and other multi-sport events' performances. The latest that it was held was last year on 17 January.

It is now well past one year since the last ceremony and the recommendations for the 2025-26 honours were made in December 2025. As per existing norms, they were to be formally announced by the Sports Ministry within a week of the finalisation with minor tweaks, if needed.

"These awards should always follow a set schedule. Whatever evaluation that needs to be done, it can be done but not by withholding names like this. I am sure most of those who have been selected are worthy of the honours," said the former Khel Ratna winner.

The view was echoed by a former Arjuna awardee and Commonwealth Games gold-medallist. Speaking on conditions of anonymity, he said the date should never have been altered and if the idea was to make 29 August solely about Major Dhyan Chand's legacy, then a new fixed date should be allotted for the awards.

"At first the date kept moving for different reasons and now the entire process stands halted, which is not the athletes' fault at all. The ministry needs to at least give some explanation because these honours are like an annual festival for sportspersons. Getting those blazer fittings, the dress rehearsal of the entire protocol and finally that moment with the President, it's a major highlight for athletes," he said.



It's not that only the former awardees are uneasy with the inordinate delay.

After the Ministry's announcement of re-evaluation, Asian championship gold-winning decathlete Tejaswin Shankar, who is recommended for the Arjuna award, had voiced his displeasure without mincing words.

"This delay is not just de-motivating to athletes and coaches but also a sign of disrespect," he had posted on X.

World Cup-winning chess player Divya Deshmukh and gymnast Pranati Nayak are among the Arjuna awards recommendations this year.

The Khel Ratna, which is the country's highest sporting honour, comes with a medallion, a citation and a cash prize of Rs 25 lakh and according to sources, men's hockey team star Hardik Singh is the only recommendation for 2025-26.

The Arjuna recommendations exceed 20 and cover diverse disciplines, including chess and the indigenous Yogasana, which would be recognised for the first time if the list remains unchanged. The Arjuna award makes the winner richer by Rs 15 lakh.

The Ministry has avoided a formal statement on what exactly has delayed the process but speaking off the record, top officials have cited concerns around whether a few recommended names have the requisite achievements for the honour.

"It shouldn't be the case that we have Arjuna awardees in every nook and corner but when you ask them about their accomplishments, there is nothing much to show. Please also don't forget the litigations and outrageous media statements that come out when some don't get awards," an official had stated. —*PTI*

Iran peace deal in doubt after US strikes

Talks don't occur in vaccum: Iran cites attacks on Lebanon

TEHRAN, 10 JUNE

After the US and Iran traded strikes, Tehran said it would "reassess" its participation in the diplomatic process, threatening to throw a peace deal that President Donald Trump claimed was "close" in the air.

"Recent conditions and developments must be carefully reviewed," Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei told reporters on Wednesday, according to state-run Press TV.

"Diplomatic processes do not take place in a vacuum," Baghaei stated, noting strikes in Lebanon and adding that "a minimum level of conducive conditions is required to allow diplomacy to move forward."

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi posted on X that the US should "leave our region if you want to be safe" adding that Tehran "will leave no attack or threat unanswered".

The Foreign Ministry also stated that Gulf countries also have "legal and moral responsibility" to prevent American and Israeli strikes, especially given that they house several American bases. Iran has repeatedly said that it retains the right to strike US military facilities in Gulf countries if it is attacked.

On Wednesday, Trump also upped the ante. "Iran's military is a complete and total mess," he posted on Truth Social. "They have been completely defeated. Iran is all talk and no action. The bully of the Middle East is dead."

Trump had earlier suggested that a peace deal was imminent.

People run in front of burned cars that were attacked in an Israeli airstrike in the southern port city of Sidon, Lebanon, on Wednesday —PTI

Araghchi, similarly, had said that the US had been defeated militarily.

The comments come as Israel continued bombing southern Lebanon, with state-run National News Agency reporting heavy shelling. The extent of the damage was not immediately clear.

'INDIANS MISSING AFTER US STRIKES SHIP NEAR OMAN '

Three out of 24 Indian crew members on board a commercial vessel that came under attack off the coast of Oman on Wednesday are missing.

"This was likely the result of US operations to blockade Iranian ports," British maritime security group Ambrey told Reuters.

The attack on commercial vessel Settebello came two days after a Palao-flagged vessel with 24 Indians came under attack of the US Navy as the ship tried to evade the US blockade of Iranian ports.

Indian condemned the attacks, but did not name the US.

UK SHIP ATTACKED NEAR YEMEN

Guards on board a cargo ship off the coast of Yemen in the Gulf of Aden exchanged fire on Wednesday with gunmen in a small boat, the British military said.

The British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations centre said the guards managed to drive the gunmen off.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. Yemen's Houthi rebels have said they will resume their attacks against Israel-affiliated ships moving through the Red Sea. Meanwhile, Somali pirates have also become more active in the region. —*Agencies*

Netanyahu has reached a level that would make Hitler jealous with his genocidal method.... The genocidal actions of Gaza by 'Butcher' Netanyahu and his cabinet are being watched with the same silence and lack of response that once greeted Hitler... Israel must be stopped.... The attacks by Netanyahu... against Syria and Lebanon have reached a point where they now threaten not only these two sister nations but also Turkey... Turkey's security begins not only in Hatay, but also in Aleppo, Damascus, and Beirut. We will not tolerate any fait accompli in our brotherly nations, nor will we turn a blind eye to aggression against them

—Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkish President

The antisemitic tyrant Erdogan, who perpetrates genocide against the Kurds, supports the terrorist organisation Hamas, oppresses his own people, and imprisons political rivals, is the last one who can preach morals to the State of Israel. Israel and the IDF, the most moral army in the world, will continue to act forcefully against Iran and its proxies that threaten the Middle East and the entire world.

—Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister

20,000 LEFT WITHOUT WATER IN 50°C AFTER US ATTACK: IRAN

TEHRAN, 10 JUNE

Abdolhamid Hamzehpour, managing director of Iran's Hormozgan province Water and Wastewater company, said that US missiles had destroyed water supply facilities in the region, leaving 20,000 residents without access to drinking water amid the scorching summer heat, state media reported. Temperatures hover between 45 and 50 degrees Celsius in the region.

Hamzehpour said that two concrete reservoirs, with capacities of 500 and 2,000 cubic meters, along with their associated mechanical equipment, were demolished in the strikes. This led to a complete halt of water distribution in affected areas, such as the town of Kuhestak and 10 villages in the Bemani district.

"The enemy has precisely targeted the infrastructure linked to the daily livelihood and health of the people," Hamzehpour said, describing the act as "crimes against humanity."

Hamzehpour said that mobile water tankers have been deployed to the region. —*Salar News*

BIBI TO SEEK RE-ELECTION, DISPELLING TRUMP'S DOUBTS

TEL AVIV, 10 JUNE

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will seek re-election this year, his party announced on Wednesday, after US President Donald Trump said he wasn't sure if "Bibi" would stand again.

In a brief statement, Netanyahu's Likud Party said he would run in the election and, God willing, he would win. The election has not yet been formally announced but must be held by October, according to Reuters.

ABC News Chief Washington Correspondent Jonathan Karl posted on X that Trump had told him he did not know if Netanyahu would stand. —*Agencies*

Indian-American owned drone boat used in Hormuz

WASHINGTON, 10 JUNE

Indian-American engineer Vibhav Altekar co-founded Texas-based Saronic Technologies, whose autonomous drone boat Corsair carried out the first US military rescue using an unmanned surface vessel. The craft helped save two crew members of a US Army Apache helicopter downed near the Strait of Hormuz. Altekar, Saronic's chief technology officer, studied electrical engineering at the University of California and leads development of the company's autonomous systems. Before Saronic, he worked on defence technology programmes and led engineering efforts on multiple projects, including Australia's Ghost Shark drone submarine.—*PTI*

Taiwan fires rockets at China from US system

TAICHUNG, 10 JUNE

Taiwan's military fired rockets in China's direction from "shoot-and-scoot" mobile launchers on Wednesday in a demonstration of how it might try to repel a Chinese attack. While the US-supplied system High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) has been tested before, the latest live-fire exercise was the first time its rockets were fired into the waters of the narrow Taiwan Strait that separates the self-governing island from China. "Due to the current enemy threat, we will continue HIMARS training with unwavering determination to protect Taiwan," Army Sgt Wang Ming-hui said. HIMARS is a truck-mounted pod of rockets that are used for "shoot-and-scoot" tactics.—*PTI*

Switzerland mulls a population cap of 10 million

GENEVA, 10 JUNE

Swiss voters will decide on Sunday whether to approve a proposal to cap the country's population at 10 million by 2050. Backed by the right-wing Swiss People's Party, the measure seeks tighter immigration controls if the population reaches 9.5 million. Supporters argue rapid growth is straining housing, infrastructure and public services, while opponents warn it could damage the economy and relations with the European Union. Switzerland's population stood at 9.1 million last year. Recent polls suggest the referendum could be closely contested.—*PTI*

Tibet govt: Lets see if communism lives more than Lama

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

One will have to see whether Dalai Lama outlives communism or vice versa, Sikyong of the Central Tibetan Administration Penpa Tsering said, referring to China's alleged assumption that the Tibet issue will die with the spiritual leader. The head of the Tibetan government-in-exile remarks came at event in New Delhi on Tuesday, when the audience asked about the Chinese assertion that they will decide the next Dalai Lama. "Chinese are not given the right; they are snatching the right," Tsering responded. Stating that the Dalai Lama is committed to for perhaps for 130 years, he noted that China believes the "Tibet issue" will die with the spiritual leader. —*PTI*

QUOTE of THE DAY

The sanctions against our leaders (eg former president Raul Castro), we see as a pretext to make the American people think we are a threat. We are not a threat

—LIANYS TORRES RIVERA,
Cuban Ambassador

Prediction mkt Kalshi to collect employment info

Prediction market platform Kalshi will start collecting customer employment information for trading in markets that are at heightened risk of insider trading, the company said. The announcement follows several incidents where traders, including some allegedly from the White House, have used inside information to profit on platforms like Kalshi and Polymarket. People can bet on possible events, such as when will Trump attack Iran, Cuba, or Venezuela.

House passes $70B bill to fund immigration drive

WASHINGTON, 10 JUNE

A bill to provide nearly USD 70 billion for immigration enforcement narrowly passed the House on Tuesday and now goes to President Donald Trump for his signature, fueling the government's deportation agenda.

The bill passed by a vote of 214-212, with Republicans using their majority.

The White House says the bill will provide USD 38 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), USD 26 billion for the Border Patrol and another USD 5 billion to cover unforeseen costs. It front-loads routine annual funding, ensuring a uninterrupted flow of money as the Trump administration seeks to deport some 1 million people per year.

The legislation got sidetracked over USD 1 billion for White House security, including for Trump's new ballroom, and a USD 1.8 billion fund to compensate his allies who claim they have been unjustly investigated and prosecuted. Those proposals proved politically toxic and were scrapped.

The funding also comes on top of the nearly USD 140 billion that the Congress gave ICE and Customs and Border Protection last year and after Homeland Security's longest shutdown. —*PTI*

ATTACKERS KILL 12, WOUND 9 IN JOHANNESBURG MASS SHOOTING

JOHANNESBURG, 10 JUNE

Multiple attackers killed 12 people and wounded at least nine others in a late-night mass shooting in the South African city of Johannesburg, police said Wednesday.

Police believe more than 10 suspects were dropped off in a minibus in an informal settlement in the Cleveland suburb of Johannesburg late Tuesday night and opened fire on people.

The victims were nine males and three females, according to police. Eleven of them died at the scene and the 12th died in the hospital.

Police are searching for the attackers, and no arrests have been made. The motive for the shootings was not yet clear, they said.

Informal settlements in South Africa are unplanned residential areas usually made up of shacks or similar structures. —*PTI*

11 kids among 26 killed as Pak bombs Afghan

ISLAMABAD, 10 JUNE

Pakistan said on Wednesday it carried out "precise and calibrated" overnight airstrikes targeted at alleged terrorist hideous in Afghanistan and killed 26 people. However, Taliban Chief spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said the latest airstrikes targeted the Afghan provinces of Khost, Kunar and Paktika and killed 11 children, one woman and one elderly man.

Pakistani Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said that the strikes targeted "masterminds and planners" belonging to Fitna Al Khwarij, a term used for the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

This is the third major conflict between the two countries, and comes a day after Taliban forces killed six Pakistani Frontier Constabulary personnel and injured four others when attempting to seize a check post some 30km southwest of Peshawar. Eight of the attackers were killed.

In the drone footage released by the army, Pakistan claimed it was carrying out precise airstrikes on Afghanistan, on Wednesday —SCREENGRAB

Islamabad also said it was retaliating to the recent rise in terror attacks, claiming that the Taliban administration was harbouring terrorists and letting them use the soil to launch attacks on Pakistan. Notably, both sides agreed to a China-Turkey brokered ceasefire in March, but occasional strikes have eruptted. —*PTI*

US blocks Pak, China's bid at UNSC to blacklist BLA

The US, France and UK has blocked a joint bid by Pakistan and China at the UN Security Council to designate the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and the Majeed Brigade as a terrorist entity. Islamabad and Beijing had submitted the joint petition in September under the Council's 1267 Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee, owing to the frequent clashes in Pakistan. Notably, The US has designated the BLA and its alias, the Majeed Brigade, as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation. India has also declared the BLA as a terrorist group.

2 killed as Taliban opens fire on people protesting hijab

Protests broke out in Herat over the arrest of women —SCREENGRAB

KABUL, 10 JUNE

The Taliban government cracked down on a rare protest against women's dress code in western Afghanistan on Tuesday, opening fire on a crowd of about 150 people. At least two women were reportedly killed.

The protests in Herat erupted against the arrest and detention of more than a dozen women who the Taliban claimed were violating the mandatory dress code in the country.

The Taliban government has imposed the Shariah law in the country, meaning that dissent is not tolerated, and protests against government decisions are illegal.

The regulations include draconian restrictions on women and girls, including bans on education beyond primary school and what women can wear. The rules stipulate that women can only go out in public when wearing full hijab — which includes a headscarf and long robe covering the entire body — as well as a face covering that leaves only the eyes visible. The regulations are policed by the feared Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice.

Reports suggest that some of the people arrested were minors, and families have no idea about their whereabouts. —*PTI*

AFTER STABBING

Anti-immigrant protests rock Ireland

BELFAST, 10 JUNE

Several parts of Northern Ireland saw violent anti-immigrant protests after a 30-year-old man from Sudan was charged with attempted murder over a stabbing attack that left a victim seriously injured.

Masked men set several homes they believed to be housing immigrants, mainly Black people, on fire, burned trash bins and a Belfast bus and pelted police with objects on Tuesday night. Firefighters rescued several people from burning homes.

Politicians from both parts of Northern Ireland's power-sharing government condemned the violence.

"Groups of masked men burning families out of their homes is nothing less than disgusting cowardice," said First Minister Michelle O'Neill of the Irish nationalist party Sinn Fein.

"If you're driving people from their homes based on nothing but the colour of their skin, you can't dress that up any other way, it's racism," said Northern Ireland Justice Minister Naomi Long.

The victim of Monday's attack, a man in his 40s, was hospitalised with serious injuries to his eyes, face and back. Police said the suspect is a Sudanese man who entered Northern Ireland under asylum from the neighbouring Republic of Ireland in 2023. He is due to be produced in court on Wednesday. The police added there is no information to suggest the attack is terrorism-related. —*PTI*

Masked protesters stand by burning trash containers on Ligoniel Road in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on Tuesday after a Sudanese man was arrested for stabbing someone —PTI

Aftershocks complicate rescues in Philippines

GENERAL SANTOS, 10 JUNE

Rescuers inspect a damaged in General Santos —PTI

At least 45 people have died and 17 others gone missing in General Santos City, which was hit by a 7.8-magnitude earthquake on Monday that left a trail of destruction across southern Mindanao, the Philippines' second-most populous region.

The earthquake has been followed by more than 2,100 aftershocks, including a few that ranged up to 6.4 magnitude, which is strong enough to cause more casualties and damage, according to Teresito Bacolcol, who heads the Philippines Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

More than 25,000 people remain displaced, many of them staying in 45 government-run emergency shelters, officials said.

Monday's quake was one of the most powerful to hit the Philippines in half a century. It injured at least 630 people and damaged more than 3,100 houses, 29 roads, 11 bridges and more than 100 government buildings.

Most of the deaths were caused by falling debris from collapsed buildings and landslides in General Santos and the nearby provinces of Sarangani, South Cotabato and Davao Occidental. At least one person died after being swept out to sea. —*PTI*

Expected RBI intervention sees Rupee rise 14P

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

The rupee appreciated 14 paise to close at 95.27 on Wednesday, amid likely intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to curb excessive volatility and prevent a further slide in the domestic unit. Forex traders said the rupee pared its initial losses and settled on a positive note as Brent crude oil prices and the US dollar index retreated from their elevated levels. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 95.52, touched a high of 95.07 and a low of 95.56. On Tuesday, the rupee rose 20 paise from Monday to close at 95.41. —*PTI*

Airtel rebrands Priority Postpaid as Fast Lane

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Bharti Airtel has rebranded its Priority Postpaid service, which triggered net neutrality debate, as Fast Lane service, extending the promise of faster connectivity to postpaid users, the company said on Wednesday. When asked if the company has shelved the Priority Postpaid plan, the company spokesperson denied the development but acknowledged the rebranding of the service as Fast Lane. "There is no question of withdrawal of our new post-paid plan... Our launch campaign has ended. And our descriptor to signal what we are doing – 'Fast Lane' - captures the essence of what we offer. Our postpaid users continue to remain on a slice. So, every user who chooses our postpaid plan and has a 5G-capable device gets an enhanced experience," the spokesperson said—*PTI*

9 Indian startups join WEF's Tech Pioneers cohort

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Nine Indian startups, including Dhruva in the space business and Varaha in the climate arena, have made it to the World Economic Forum's latest list of new technology pioneers. Releasing the list, the WEF said these 100 early-stage startups from 23 countries are building the infrastructure for the next era of AI and are developing breakthrough technologies with the potential to transform industries and societies. India has contributed nine companies, many focused on deep-tech and space innovation, while the Republic of Korea records its strongest representation to date across AI, robotics and quantum technologies. Companies from the Middle East, Latin America and South-East Asia are also strengthening their presence in emerging technology ecosystems. The cohort reflects the expanding geographies of frontier innovation. —*PTI*

Nuvama gets Sebi nod for mutual fund business

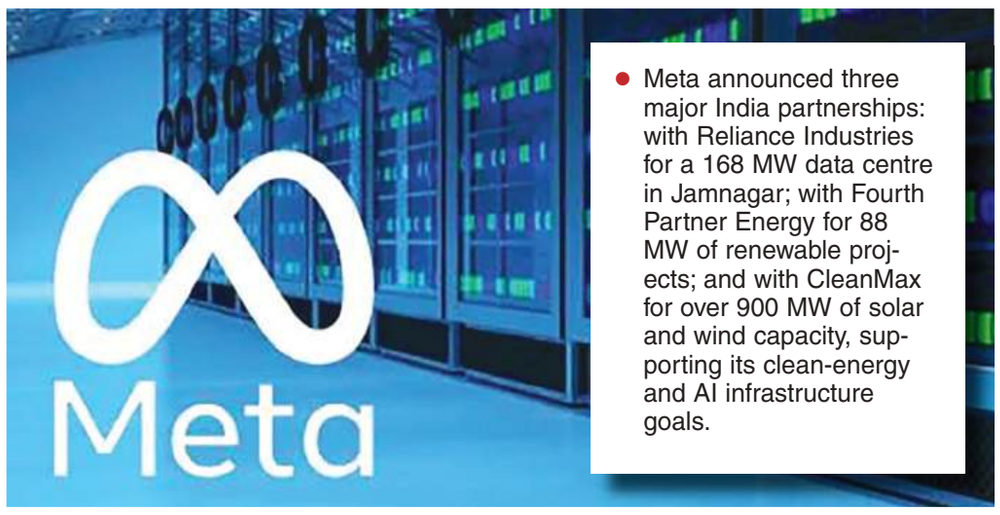
NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Nuvama Wealth Management Ltd on Wednesday said it has received final approval from markets regulator Sebi to commence mutual fund operations through its asset management arm, Nuvama Asset Management. The approval paves the way for the company to establish its mutual fund business and expand its asset management offerings. Nuvama said its asset management company will initially seek regulatory approvals to launch investment products under the Specialised Investment Fund (SIF) framework, followed by a broader range of mutual fund products over time. "Sebi's approval to establish our mutual fund business is another important building block in Nuvama's integrated wealth and asset management platform," Nuvama Group Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Ashish Kehair said. —*PTI*

Meta partners with RIL for data centres in Gujarat

The 168 MW capacity facility will be Meta's first in India

NEW DELHI, 3 JUNE



- Meta announced three major India partnerships: with Reliance Industries for a 168 MW data centre in Jamnagar; with Fourth Partner Energy for 88 MW of renewable projects; and with CleanMax for over 900 MW of solar and wind capacity, supporting its clean-energy and AI infrastructure goals.

Meta's growing infrastructure in India is supported by renewable power and will help address Meta's value chain emissions in the region –*AI*

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) announced a partnership with Meta Platforms on Wednesday for a data centre in Jamnagar, Gujarat — the first built-to-suit data centre capacity in India for the American tech giant.

RIL will develop the facility with a 168 MW capacity, to be delivered within two years, with an option to scale. Meta will lease capacity from the facility to support its global infrastructure.

Under the agreement, RIL will provide end-to-end services across the data centre's lifecycle — from design and construction to utilities management, renewable power supply, network connectivity, and operations — positioning itself as a single-window solutions provider for hyperscale AI infrastructure in India.

The partnership aligns with the Government of India's designation of data centres as strategic national infrastructure and its long-term policy framework to attract global AI infrastructure investment.

META PARTNERS WITH FPL

Fourth Partner Energy (FPEL) announced a partnership with Meta on Wednesday for 88 MWac of renewable energy projects across Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh.

Fourth Partner Energy will own and operate the solar and wind portfolio, while Meta will purchase 100 per cent stake of the associated environmental attributes.

The company currently operates 1.7 GW of solar and wind assets in India, with 3 GW under development and a target portfolio of 9 GW by 2031.

META PARTNERS WITH CLEANMAX

Meta and CleanMax Enviro Energy Solutions announced a partnership on Wednesday for over 900 MW of renewable energy capacity in India, including 837 MW of new solar and wind projects across Rajasthan and Karnataka.

Combined with previously announced projects, the collaboration now represents more than 900 MW in total capacity. CleanMax will develop and operate the projects; Meta will purchase 100 per cent of the environmental attributes.

All three partnerships advance Meta's goal of matching its global electricity use with 100 per cent clean and renewable energy and addressing its value chain emissions in the region. —*Agencies*

RS 725 CR OUTFLOW IN MAY

Gold ETFs break 13-month streak of positive inflow

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Gold ETFs (Exchange-Traded Funds) snapped a 13-month winning streak in May, recording a net outflow of Rs 725 crore.

Data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) shows this was the first withdrawal since April 2025 dip of Rs 5.82 crore, driven by government appeals against gold purchases and AMCs halting fresh inflows. The dip sharply reverses April's Rs 3,040 crore inflow.

After strong inflows in January, momentum slowed in later months, reflecting reduced allocations. The decline was likely driven by profit-taking after the gold rally and a shift away from safe-haven assets as investor risk appetite improved.

"With gold at record highs, government caution on gold purchases, and some AMCs halting ETF inflows, investors appear more pragmatic. After the sharp rally, return expectations have moderated, prompting some investors to book profits and shift funds to beaten-down equities," said Feroze Azeez, Joint CEO, Anand Rathi Wealth.

One gold ETF unit is equivalent to 1 gram of high-purity physical gold. The instrument combines the flexibility of stock investments with the simplicity of gold investments.

Nehal Meshram, Senior Analyst, Morningstar Investment Research India, said the rising opportunity cost of holding gold, particularly in an environment of relatively attractive yields in fixed income, may have contributed to the pullback. The pattern of flows also suggests that a significant portion of earlier allocations was tactical in nature, making them more sensitive to price movements and short-term macro cues. —*PTI*

Stock markets retreat from day's high; end flat

MUMBAI, 3 JUNE

Sensex and Nifty retreated from their day's high and ended flat on Wednesday as renewed hostilities between the US and Iran unsettled investor sentiment.

Weak trends in global markets and relentless foreign fund outflows also made investors cautious, according to analysts.

Sensex trimmed most of its intraday gains during the fag-end of trading and settled 64.42 points, or 0.09 per cent, higher at 73,983.18.

Nifty, however, dipped 27.15 points, or 0.12 per cent, to end at 23,214.95. The benchmark index hit a high of 23,425.35 and a low of 23,184.60 in intraday trade.

Among the Sensex constituents, Hindustan Unilever, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, ICICI Bank, ITC and HDFC Bank were the biggest winners.

Eternal Ltd, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finserv and Titan were among the laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 4,566.03 crore on Tuesday.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, dipped 0.20 per cent to USD 91.27 per barrel.

On Tuesday, Sensex climbed 394.50 points, Nifty ended 119.10 points higher. —*PTI*

AMID TAX RELIEF

FPI flow pushes 10-yr bond yield down 0.10%

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

–FREEPIK

Indian government bond yields dropped sharply in the last four days, with the benchmark 10-year yield falling 0.10 per cent, as foreign portfolio investor (FPI) inflows picked up after the government's recent tax relief measures for debt investments.

According to the data compiled by PTI, the 10-year benchmark bond yield eased to 6.911 per cent on Wednesday, from 7.024 per cent on 3 June.

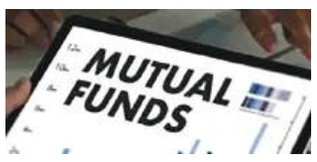
Money market experts attributed the easing yields on government securities to heavy inflows of Rs 11,026.331 crore in the last four days by foreign investors in these securities under the Fully Accessible Route (FAR). FAR allows non-resident investors to invest in specified Government of India dated securities without any investment ceilings.

Inflows by foreign investors started after the government on June 5 promulgated an ordinance amending the Income Tax Act to provide tax exemption on interest income and capital gains arising from the sale, exchange or transfer of government securities held by FPIs. The exemption is applicable retrospectively from April 1, 2025.

Further, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced a slew of measures in the June monetary policy to attract foreign capital to India, including expanding the universe of securities available under the FAR by including all new issuances of 15-year, 30-year and 40-year tenor government securities. —*PTI*

Equity MFs inflow hits lowest level in a year to Rs 22,908 crore

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE



Equity mutual funds recorded a net inflow of Rs 22,908 crore in May, the lowest in a year, as market volatility amid West Asia crisis and high crude oil prices weighed on investor sentiment and led to lower allocations to the asset class.

The inflow declined 40 per cent from the Rs 38,440 crore recorded in April, according to the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) on Wednesday. AMFI Chief Venkat Chalasani attributed the marginal contraction in the industry's AUM to ongoing geopolitical uncertainties and price volatility.

Similarly, the monthly SIP contributions declined marginally to Rs 30,954 crore in May from Rs 31,115 crore in April, extending the moderation seen after inflows fell from Rs 32,087 crore in March.

Despite the sequential decline, Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs) remained a key pillar of the mutual fund industry, with SIP assets under management (AUM) rising to Rs 17.12 lakh crore in May, accounting for nearly 21 per cent of the industry's total AUM.

Overall, the mutual fund industry reported a net outflow of over Rs 64,000 crore in May against a net inflow of Rs 3.22 lakh crore in April, primarily due to a withdrawal of Rs 96,948 crore from debt-oriented schemes. —*PTI*

Addverb looks to raise $100M funding to boost growth

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

–AI

Robotics and warehouse company Addverb looks to raise more than USD 100 million (around Rs 952 crore) to invest in new technologies and boost its market share, a top company official said on Wednesday.

Addverb, whose robots handle sorting, material movement and other tasks at logistics firms, warehouses and electronics companies, is scouting for more capital.

This comes after expanding in markets including the US, the Netherlands and Australia, Chief Executive Officer Sangeet Kumar said.

The company is investing in new technologies as it eyes growth in areas such as humanoid robots and prepares for a stock market debut in a few years, he said.

Addverb has built a growing customer base across industries and is now expanding its footprint globally as it sets its sights on becoming one of the world's leading robotics companies.

"We want to be in the Top 10 in the next five years and Top 5 in the next 10 years," Kumar said. The firm estimates it currently ranks just outside the global top 30 in robotics market share by revenue. —*PTI*

India's current account deficit to be 1.8% of GDP: Report

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

India's current account deficit is expected to narrow to 1.8 per cent of GDP in FY27, down from an earlier projection of around 2 per cent. The revision follows a stable external sector performance in the preceding fiscal year, even as the trade deficit widened.

According to an ICICI Bank Global Market report, resilient invisible receipts and lower gold imports—expected to fall to USD 55 billion from USD 72 billion last year—are key factors behind the revision.

Invisible receipts offset the rising trade deficit at USD 312 billion, up 18 per cent year-on-year, driven by services exports of USD 217 billion (up 15 per cent) and remittance inflows of USD 144 billion (up 16 per cent), the report said. Concurrently, the outgo on account of investment income remained flat at USD 48 billion in FY26.

Policy interventions, including the expansion of gilts in the Fully Accessible Route for FPIs and FX swap schemes, are expected to alter the capital account trajectory. —*ANI*

'TALKS WITH GOVT ONGOING'

Starlink refutes claims of frozen India approvals

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

–X

Starlink is in active discussions with the Indian government and has received encouraging feedback on its potential to support the country's connectivity goals, said Lauren Dreyer, Vice President of Business Operations, on Wednesday.

Starlink has secured a licence to offer satellite broadband services in India and established ground infrastructure to meet regulatory requirements. The company is now awaiting final approval, including spectrum allocation, before launching services.

Dreyer's comments came in response to media reports that India had effectively frozen approvals for Starlink's commercial launch over concerns related to the use of its satellite terminals during the Iran conflict.

She added that Starlink had completed all required regulatory and compliance processes and developed a country-specific operating model to meet India's security requirements, including routing all user traffic exclusively through domestic ground infrastructure.

"To align with India's sovereign technology, regulatory and security requirements, Starlink has set up a bespoke deployment model for India that further demonstrates our commitment to working within India's strategic framework," she said.

Starlink is SpaceX's satellite internet service that delivers high-speed broadband through thousands of low-Earth-orbit satellites. Its low-orbit network reduces latency and improves speeds compared to traditional satellite internet, making it well-suited for streaming, gaming, and real-time communication.

The service operates in dozens of countries and has been used to improve connectivity in remote areas from North America and Australia to parts of Africa, as well as to support communications during emergencies. —*PTI*

Google Cloud down after fire at Delhi data centre

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Google Cloud

Google Cloud services in major Indian cities, including Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai, are experiencing network disruptions and elevated latency following a fire at a third-party data centre facility in Delhi.

The incident began late Tuesday night. "Network traffic to Google Cloud originating from Delhi, Chennai, Mumbai and surrounding areas is experiencing intermittent periods of elevated latency and possible packet loss," the company stated.

The fire necessitated an emergency power shutdown of networking equipment, which isolated a local Point of Presence (POP) in Delhi and reduced available network capacity in the metro area, according to an update on the Google Cloud Service Health dashboard.

To address the reduced local serving capabilities, Google said it has rerouted significant traffic from the impacted facility in Delhi. However, this has led to intermittent latency spikes as demand is exceeding capacity across Indian metros and regional Internet Service Providers (ISPs). —*PTI*

Harry Brook is No.1 Test batter in ICC rankings

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE:

England's Test vice-captain Harry Brook has climbed to the top of the ICC Men's Test batting rankings, replacing teammate Joe Root in the latest update on Wednesday. Brook regained the No. 1 position following his half-century in the first innings of a low-scoring ICC World Test Championship (WTC) 2025-27 match against New Zealand at Lord's, which England went on to win by 115 runs, according to ICC. Australia's Travis Head has moved up to second place in the rankings, while Joe Root has slipped to third ahead of the second Test between England and New Zealand at The Oval, scheduled from 17 June. *—ANI*

Kochhar, Bhullar in golf contingent for Morocco

RABAT (MOROCCO), 10 JUNE:

In excellent form with three top-10 finishes in just five Asian Tour starts this season, Karandeep Kochhar will lead a 10-member Indian contingent in the International Series Morocco golf tournament which will tee off on Thursday. The other Indians in the USD 2 million event are Anirban Lahiri, Gaganjeet Bhullar, Aryan Roopa Anand, Udayan Mane, SSP Chawrasia, Rashid Khan, Shaurya Bhattacharya, Ajeetesh Sandhu and Shubham Jaglan The 26-year-old Kochhar was tied ninth at last week's AM Green IGPL Bharath Classic, after a tied fifth at International Series Japan and fourth place at the Philippine Golf Championship. Late last year, he won the Egypt Golf Series Red Sea Open on the Asian Development Tour. "I think I've been playing really well this year. I've only played five events so far and I've already had three top-10 finishes, so that's definitely encouraging," said a confident Kochhar. *—PTI*

Mourinho to move to Real Madrid after Arbeloa

MADRID, 10 JUNE:

Benfica's coach José Mourinho had agreed to return to Real Madrid, which earlier announced that it had parted ways with its coach Álvaro Arbeloa. Madrid President Florentino Pérez had vowed to bring Mourinho back as part of his campaign promises that led to his re-election on Sunday. In a note to shareholders, Benfica said that Madrid had formally agreed to pay Benfica 15 million euros ($17.3 million) for Mourinho with the Portuguese coach agreeing to the move. Benfica added: "Thank you, José Mourinho." Madrid has made no official announcement. Mourinho, who was featured in promotional material for Pérez during the campaign, would be back for a second stint at Madrid. He coached the club from 2010-2013. *—PTI*

Sancho leaves Man United, Bissouma out of Tottenham

LONDON, 10 JUNE:

Manchester United winger Jadon Sancho and Tottenham midfielder Yves Bissouma are among the players being released by their Premier League teams at the end of their contracts. Sancho joined United from Borussia Dortmund for 85 million euros ($100 million) in 2021 but has been underwhelming, only making 83 appearances during his five years there. He had loan spells in that time at Dortmund, Chelsea and most recently Aston Villa. United confirmed on Wednesday that Brazil midfielder Casemiro and left back Tyrell Malacia were also leaving the team. Bissouma, a Mali international, moved to Tottenham from Brighton for 25 million pounds ($30.5 million) in 2022 and played 111 times for the London club, including starting the Europa League final win over Man United in 2025. *—PTI*

'FELT GREAT'

Says Messi after Argentina's 3-0 win over Iceland

ALABAMA, JUNE 10:

WARM-UPS

Legendary footballer Lionel Messi expressed satisfaction with both his performance and physical condition after Argentina's convincing 3-0 win over Iceland in their final FIFA World Cup 2026 warm-up match on Wednesday.

Played at Jordan-Hare Stadium in Alabama, the Inter Miami forward was introduced in the 70th minute and calmly converted a penalty in Argentina's comfortable victory.

After the match, Messi expressed his relief at his physical condition to TyC Sports, as quoted by Goal.com, "Enjoying it from the start, I was eager to play for a while since I arrived with this discomfort. Happy, enjoying every moment, and excited as always. I felt great, I was keen to get started and shake off the fears you have when you have this discomfort, to be able to play freely. We have a week to get everyone fit and ready for the opening match."

Earlier, the legendary footballer shared a series of pictures on his Instagram handle after the defending champions' 3-0 win over Iceland.

Coming to the warm-up fixture, La Albiceleste endured an early scare after Iceland squandered a clear scoring opportunity in the opening minutes, but the world champions soon asserted control over the contest. Valentin Barco broke the deadlock in the eighth minute with a brilliant strike from outside the box, giving Argentina an early advantage.

In the second half, Lionel Messi made an instant impact after being introduced from the bench, with his incisive pass leading to Lautaro Martinez winning a penalty. Messi then calmly converted from the spot in the 72nd minute to double Argentina's lead.

Thiago Almada later completed the scoring in the 86th minute, finishing off a well-worked move involving Messi and Martinez that dismantled Iceland's defence.

Argentina stayed dominant throughout, heading into the World Cup on a high after a convincing final preparatory performance. *—ANI*

All eyes on Ronaldo as Portugal eyes Cup

LEIRIA (PORTUGAL), 10 JUNE:

As the 2026 FIFA World Cup approaches, the footballing world is once again focusing its lens on Cristiano Ronaldo. Poised to make his historic sixth appearance at the tournament across the United States, Canada, and Mexico, the 41-year-old forward continues to defy the passage of time, a feat not lost on former Portugal teammate Beto.

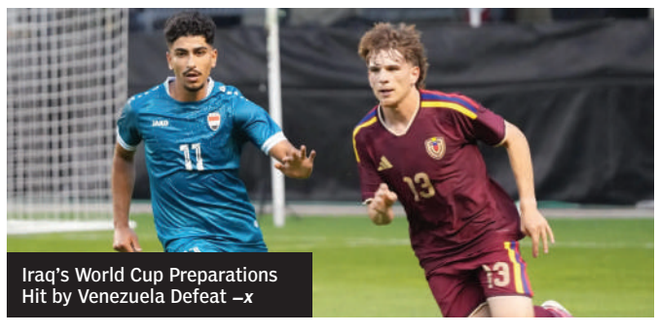
While many speculate that this could be the Al-Nassr superstar's swan song on the global stage, Beto suggests that Ronaldo's legendary dedication to his fitness might extend his international career beyond this summer.

"The World Cup will be Cristiano's last, but I don't know if it will be his last major competition, because he takes care of himself and is very focused on his profession," Beto told Goal.com.

Despite Ronaldo's individual brilliance, Beto emphasised that Portugal's aspirations for a first-ever World Cup title will depend on the strength of the unit rather than the heroics of a single player. "The expectations are always positive, he makes the difference, and, for me, inside the area, he continues to make a big difference," the former defender noted. "Now, alone, no one wins anything; the collective must be good, not just Ronaldo."

Beto, who played alongside the iconic forward, believes the current squad is among the most talented in Portuguese history. Under the guidance of Roberto Martinez, the team is viewed as a genuine contender to surpass their best-ever third-place finish in 1966.

"The expectations are very high because Portugal has a fantastic set of players, with many solutions and a very strong group," Beto said. "It should, and I think it will, take advantage of this great opportunity." *—ANI*



Iraq's World Cup Preparations Hit by Venezuela Defeat *–x*

IRAQ LOSE TO VENEZUELA, SAUDI ARABIA DRAW WITH SENEGAL

PENNSYLVANIA, 10 JUNE:

Iraq suffered a 2-0 defeat against Venezuela in their final FIFA World Cup 2026 warm-up friendly in Bridgeville, Illinois, on Wednesday.

Venezuela took the lead in the 17th minute through Cristian Casseres, who finished from close range to put the South American side ahead. The visitors doubled their advantage immediately after the restart when Casseres won possession and set up striker Jesus Ramirez, who beat a defender before unleashing a powerful finish to make it 2-0.

Iraq's night further worsened as they were reduced to 10 men in the 72nd minute after forward Ali Youssef was shown a straight red card.

Despite the defeat, Iraq will return to the World Cup finals for the first time in 40 years, with their Group I campaign set to begin against Norway on June 17, followed by matches against France and Senegal.

In another warm-up fixture, Saudi Arabia played out a goalless draw against 10-man Senegal in their final preparatory match before the tournament.

Saudi Arabia, coached by Giorgos Donis, made several changes in the second half after fielding a strong starting lineup and created early chances, including a close effort from Musab Al Juwayr in the 10th minute.

Saudi Arabia will open their Group H campaign against Uruguay on 16 June, while Senegal begins their Group I journey against France before facing Norway and Iraq. *—ANI*

OLD IS GOLD

Eight 40-plus players to feature at 2026 FIFA

WASHINGTON DC, 10 JUNE:

Craig Gordon, Essam El Haadary, Guillermo Ochoa *INSTA*

The 2026 FIFA World Cup will feature a record eight players aged 40 or older in squad selections for the tournament, which will be staged across Canada, Mexico, and the United States -- surpassing the total number of such players who have appeared across all previous 22 editions combined.

The oldest player expected at the FIFA World Cup is Scotland goalkeeper Craig Gordon, who will be 43 at the tournament and, if he plays, would become the second-oldest World Cup appearance-maker in history behind Egypt's Essam El Hadary, who played at 45 against Saudi Arabia in 2018.

Meanwhile, Cristiano Ronaldo will be the oldest outfield player at 41 and is set to feature in a record sixth World Cup. He shares that milestone with 40-year-old Mexico goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa and Lionel Messi, who turns 39 later this month.

Other players aged over 40 at this tournament include Cape Verde's debutant goalkeeper Vozinha and Germany's 2014 World Cup winner Manuel Neuer, who is aiming to recover from a calf injury in time to feature against Curacao in Houston on Sunday.

Meanwhile, Uruguay goalkeeper Fernando Muslera will turn 40 next Tuesday, a day after Uruguay open their Group H campaign against Saudi Arabia in Miami.

FIFA has confirmed a record-breaking participation for the 2026 World Cup, with final squad lists revealing 1,248 players from 48 nations set to compete in the expanded global tournament.

Notably, the 2026 World Cup will feature more teams, players and matches than any previous edition of the marquee event, as per the FIFA Website.

Argentina are the reigning champion of the World Cup after winning the 2022 tournament in Qatar. Led by legendary footballer Lionel Messi, Argentina defeated France in a thrilling final decided on penalties (4-2) after the match ended 3-3 in extra time. *—ANI*

Injured Hardik Pandya ruled out of Afghanistan ODI series

MULLANPUR, 10 JUNE:

Cleared to play just hours ago, India all-rounder Hardik Pandya was on Wednesday ruled out of the three-match ODI series against Afghanistan after picking up a fresh quadriceps strain.

Pandya was at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru to get clearance for his back spasm injury which he sustained in the IPL while playing for the Mumbai Indians.

It is learnt that the new injury could be a result of him bowling the full quota of 10 overs at the CoE during the assessment.

The ODI series against Afghanistan begins on Saturday at Dharamsala followed by games in Lucknow and Chennai on 17 and 20 June respectively.

"With three weeks for recovery, there is absolutely no chance of him playing the ODI series as his rehabilitation will not be complete," said a BCCI source.

Pandya had missed quite a few games in the IPL for MI but returned for the team's last couple of matches.

The latest injury setback to the 32-year-old all-rounder comes at a time when he is being pushed towards playing more ODI cricket with next year's ODI World Cup in mind.

A left ankle injury to Pandya in the 2023 ODI World Cup during a first-round clash against Bangladesh had altered the team's balance.

Pandya continues to remain integral to India's plans for the mega event in 2027 in South Africa. *—PTI*

MANAV SUTHAR TO PLAY FOR WARWICKSHIRE

LONDON, 10 JUNE:

Left-arm spinner Manav Suthar, who starred in India's win against Afghanistan in the recent one-off Test, has signed with English club Warwickshire for the next two rounds of the County Championship, the club announced on Wednesday.

Suthar will be available for selection for two rounds of Rothesay County Championship -- the game against Yorkshire at Scarborough from 12 to 15 June and the next fixtures against Somerset at Taunton the following week.

Suthar, a left-arm finger spinning all-rounder, made his Test debut for India against Afghanistan. He took six for 33 in the first innings. The 23-year-old has also taken 129 wickets in 29 first-class matches. *—PTI*

Indian women shine at Aus Open as Sindhu, Tanvi win

SYDNEY, 10 JUNE:

Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu led a strong show by Indian women with an easy victory while teenager Tanvi Sharma pulled off an upset win in the women's singles competition at the Australian Open Super 500 badminton tournament here, on Wednesday.

Third seed Sindhu, Tanvi, Malvika Bansod, Isharani Baruah and Tanya Hemanth all progressed to the Round of 16, but it was a disappointing day for the Indian men with Kiran George, Tharun Mannepalli and qualifier Saneeth Dayanand bowing out in the opening round.

Sindhu barely broke a sweat in her opener, outclassing Peru's Ines Lucia Castillo Salazar 21-13, 21-11 in just 32 minutes. The former world champion was in complete control throughout the contest, dominating the rallies and never allowing her opponent to settle into a rhythm.

Sindhu will next face compatriot Isharani, who fought hard to overcome China's Han Qian Xi 22-20, 10-21, 21-14 in a one-hour three-minute battle.

The biggest result of the day came from 17-year-old Tanvi, who upset fifth seed and world No. 11 Chiu Pin-Chian of Chinese Taipei 21-12, 22-20 in 45 minutes.

World No. 36 Tanvi will now take on fellow Indian Malvika in the round of 16 after the latter recovered from a game down to beat Thailand's Tonrug Saeheng 15-21, 21-7, 21-13. *—PTI*

FIFA WORLD CUP 2026 GROUP STAGES FULL SCHEDULE

DATE (IST)	IST KICK-OFF TIME	MATCH & GROUP		VENUE
12 June	1.30am	Mexico vs. South Africa	(Group A)	Mexico City
	7.30am	South Korea vs. UEFA Playoff D	(Group A)	Guadalajara
13 June	12.30am	Canada vs. UEFA Playoff A	(Group B)	Toronto
	3.30am	USA vs. Paraguay	(Group D)	Los Angeles
	6.30am	Australia vs. UEFA Playoff C	(Group D)	Vancouver
	9.30pm	Brazil vs. Morocco	(Group C)	New York/NJ
14 June	12.30am	Haiti vs. Scotland	(Group C)	Boston
	3.30am	Qatar vs. Switzerland	(Group B)	San Francisco Bay Area
	6.30am	Germany vs. Curaçao	(Group E)	Houston
15 June	12.30am	Ivory Coast vs. Ecuador	(Group E)	Philadelphia
	3.30am	Netherlands vs. Japan	(Group F)	Dallas
	6.30am	UEFA Playoff B vs. Tunisia	(Group F)	Monterrey
16 June	12.30am	Spain vs. Cape Verde	(Group H)	Atlanta
	3.30am	Saudi Arabia vs. Uruguay	(Group H)	Miami
	6.30am	Belgium vs. Egypt	(Group G)	Seattle
17 June	12.30am	Iran vs. New Zealand	(Group G)	Los Angeles
	3.30am	France vs. Senegal	(Group I)	New York/NJ
	6.30am	FIFA Playoff 2 vs. Norway	(Group I)	Boston
18 June	12.30am	Argentina vs. Algeria	(Group J)	Kansas City
	3.30am	Austria vs. Jordan	(Group J)	San Francisco Bay Area
	6.30pm	Portugal vs. FIFA Playoff 1	(Group K)	Houston
	9.30pm	Uzbekistan vs. Colombia	(Group K)	Mexico City
19 June	12.30am	England vs. Croatia	(Group L)	Dallas
	3.30am	Ghana vs. Panama	(Group L)	Toronto
	6.30am	UEFA Playoff D vs. South Africa	(Group A)	Atlanta
	9.30am	Switzerland vs. UEFA Playoff A	(Group B)	Los Angeles
20 June	12.30am	Canada vs. Qatar	(Group B)	Vancouver
	3.30am	Mexico vs. South Korea	(Group A)	Guadalajara
	6.30am	Brazil vs. Haiti	(Group C)	Philadelphia
	9.30pm	Scotland vs. Morocco	(Group C)	Boston
21 June	12.30am	UEFA Playoff C vs. Paraguay	(Group D)	San Francisco Bay Area
	3.30am	USA vs. Australia	(Group D)	Seattle
	6.30am	Germany vs. Ivory Coast	(Group E)	Toronto
	9.30pm	Ecuador vs. Curaçao	(Group E)	Kansas City
22 June	12.30am	Netherlands vs. UEFA Playoff B	(Group F)	Houston
	3.30am	Tunisia vs. Japan	(Group F)	Monterrey
	6.30am	Uruguay vs. Cape Verde	(Group H)	Miami
	9.30pm	Spain vs. Saudi Arabia	(Group H)	Atlanta
23 June	12.30am	Belgium vs. Iran	(Group G)	Los Angeles
	3.30am	New Zealand vs. Egypt	(Group G)	Vancouver
	6.30am	Norway vs. Senegal	(Group I)	New York/NJ
24 June	12.30am	France vs. FIFA Playoff 2	(Group I)	Philadelphia
	3.30am	Argentina vs. Austria	(Group J)	Dallas
	6.30am	Jordan vs. Algeria	(Group J)	San Francisco Bay Area
25 June	12.30am	England vs. Ghana	(Group L)	Boston
	12.30am	Panama vs. Croatia	(Group L)	Toronto
	3.30am	Portugal vs. Uzbekistan	(Group K)	Houston
	3.30am	Colombia vs. FIFA Playoff 1	(Group K)	Guadalajara
	6.30am	Scotland vs. Brazil	(Group C)	Miami
	6.30am	Morocco vs. Haiti	(Group C)	Atlanta
26 June	12.30am	Canada vs. Switzerland	(Group B)	Vancouver
	12.30am	UEFA Playoff A vs. Qatar	(Group B)	Seattle
	3.30am	Mexico vs. UEFA Playoff D	(Group A)	Mexico City
	3.30am	South Korea vs. South Africa	(Group A)	Monterrey
	6.30am	Ecuador vs. Germany	(Group E)	New York/NJ
	6.30am	Curaçao vs. Ivory Coast	(Group E)	Philadelphia
	9.30pm	Tunisia vs. Netherlands	(Group F)	Kansas City
	9.30pm	Japan vs. UEFA Playoff B	(Group F)	Dallas
27 June	12.30am	UEFA Playoff C vs. USA	(Group D)	Los Angeles
	12.30am	Paraguay vs. Australia	(Group D)	San Francisco Bay Area
	3.30am	Norway vs. France	(Group I)	Boston
	3.30am	Senegal vs. FIFA Playoff 2	(Group I)	Toronto
	6.30am	New Zealand vs. Belgium	(Group G)	Vancouver
	6.30am	Egypt vs. Iran	(Group G)	Seattle

KNOCKOUT SCHEDULE

STAGE	START DATE (IST)	FINAL DATE (IST)	TIMINGS (IST) (APPROXIMATELY)
Round of 32	28 June	3 July	Primarily 12.30am, 3.30am, 6.30am
Round of 16	4 July	8 July	Primarily 12.30am, 3.30am, 6.30am
Quarterfinals	9 July	12 July	Primarily 12.30am & 3.30am
Semifinal 1	15 July		1.30am (Arlington, TX)
Semifinal 2	16 July		1.30am (Atlanta, GA)
Third-Place Match	19 July		1.30am IST (Miami)

WORLD CUP FINAL

20 JULY
12.30am IST
(NEW YORK)

GROUP	TEAM 1	TEAM 2	TEAM 3	TEAM 4
A	Mexico	South Africa	Korea Republic	Winner UEFA play-off D
B	Canada	Winner UEFA play-off A	Qatar	Switzerland
C	Brazil	Morocco	Haiti	Scotland
D	USA	Paraguay	Australia	Winner UEFA Play-off C
E	Germany	Curacao	Ivory Coast	Ecuador
F	Netherlands	Japan	Winner UEFA Play-off B	Tunisia
G	Belgium	Egypt	Iran	New Zealand
H	Spain	Cape Verde	Saudi Arabia	Uruguay
I	France	Senegal	Winner Play-off 2	Norway
J	Argentina	Algeria	Austria	Jordan
K	Portugal	Winner Play-off 1	Uzbekistan	Colombia
L	England	Croatia	Ghana	Panama

CREATING HISTORY

3
HOST COUNTRIES
(USA, CANANDA, MEXICO

48
TEAMS
(EXPANDES FROM 32)

16
STADIUMS

104
MATCHES

FIFA FRENZY SWEEPS ACROSS INDIA

Clockwise from top: World Cup fever kicks into high gear as a young fan puts up a banner of Brazil stars Neymar Jr, Casemiro and Vinicius Jr in Kolkata's Howrah; Argentina's blue-and-white colours take over the streets of Keralam's Thiruvananthapuram; An artist paints murals of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo in Mumbai; And a shopkeeper stocks up on team jerseys in Siliguri —PTI/ANI